

Report on Participation in EA program Field trip in Thailand

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Academically speaking I enjoyed the overall field trip as an experience to put in practice my knowledge and share with my peers on a diverse range of issues. The three parts of the trip: Northern Thailand, Bangkok and Khao Yai were three different and defined parts that I wish to use for this report.

I was very eager to participate in the two conferences/workshops at *Chiang Mai University* and *Chulalongkorn University*. It was probably the best “put-in-practice” event we could have had because it would allow, probably for the first time for most of us, to present publicly our research and our methods, and exchange with our peers. Nonetheless, I believe there was an issue of seriousness from the part of some students of our host universities. The workshops were definitively not of an international level and even not of a basic Graduate school level. I was very disappointed by that and would like to emphasize the fact that when someone comes to present a not understandable 4 slides presentations of 3 minutes about “Sign eating” just after yourself it make you feel a little bit disrespected... That being said, I believe this kind of event should be the guiding line of the future field research trips as it really forces each participant to focus on its research and make it understandable and presentable to anyone.

There were two kinds of thematic field visits. Three of them were agriculture related (*Royal Farm Project*, *King of Corn* and *Harmony life*) and even if I’m not an agriculture specialist I could find my interest and the link to my own research. Those three visits were in my opinion well selected and allowed us to question and analyze different aspects at each farm model we have seen. I deeply appreciated the fact that my questions about climate change were not avoided and to some extent answered. I think I could use these answer, not especially for my research, but to broaden my “field-knowledge” about the effect and measure taken to tackle a climate issue. I can’t say the same for the Vineyard, which was for me more a bad joke than a real visit. Everything was screaming “unsustainability”: First the land is owned by a rich Thai family that bought the land to change a local agriculture of cashew nuts to an exogenous non-tropical vine tree plantation. Second the business plan to sell and educate consumer to “New latitude wines” that have a huge need of water in an area that lack of this resource the majority of the year is genuinely problematic. Finally the growing system that needs not only ground water but also pesticides to avoid the vine not to suffer from tropical infections made me uncomfortable to visit as a Sustainable development program delegation. On a certain sense, I can say that this visit has shown us that our world still need a lot to realize what sustainability means. I would hope that my colleagues realized that but I’m afraid that most of them didn’t get how unsustainable this place was and how directed to a certain social elite lifestyle it was...

Finally the UNESCAP and UNIDO visits were probable the most related to my academic interest but also the ones I was the most familiar with. I believe that kind of meeting to help everyone to broaden the perspective from our personal research to the global challenges of our time. I would have appreciated if we could have spent more time with these two UN bodies, maybe by discussing our research topic with them, at least for some of us. Moreover I think the UNIDO relationship with the EA program & the GSE of Kyoto University via the very resourceful Mr. Clarence-Smith should be continued and used to deepen future meetings with this agency.

The global recommendation I give for the future is to organize more debriefing meetings within the delegation

and to try to make everyone give their opinion about the day events. Same recommendation could be done to prepare the next day events, maybe by discussing the important points of the next meeting (Sustainable farming etc...). Overall this field trip was a nice experience for me and I'm very grateful I had the opportunity to join the Kyoto University delegation. I consider this kind of field trip to be very useful in the curricula of an international program as the EA program. It hasn't really changed my career plan but probably confirmed my actual professional orientation.