



Titling against grabbing? Critiques and conundrums around land formalisation in Southeast Asia

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Land titling in SE Asia

- Key arguments/assumptions:
 - Benefits for states – legibility, control, revenue
 - Security on the part of farmers → productive investment
 - “Property effect” → collateral, fungibility as capital
 - Motor of economic development
- Land titling programs
 - Colonial antecedents
 - World Bank/AusAID/LEI approach in Thailand, Laos, Philippines, Java
 - LMAP (Cambodia)
 - Red book in Vietnam

Land grabbing in SE Asia

- Historically land rich – land for the taking
- Increasingly taken from someone else
- Cambodia – economic land concessions, urban development
- Laos – plantations, dams, mines
- Thailand – forest reserve land
- etc

Claims and counterclaims

- Does title enhance security of tenure?
- Does titling reinforce existing inequality or merely formalise/secure existing patterns of land ownership?
- Is the problem with titling that it goes too far or not far enough?
- Does titling broaden or narrow land ownership?
- Is titling consistent with national land policy and prevailing political economy of land?
- Does titling lead to more intensive/productive use of land?

Concluding conundrum

- Most farmers and other landholders are pleased to obtain formal title over plots of land that they hold individually under more weakly demarcated and state-recognised arrangements....
- ...but the process of land titling in some areas can weaken security in others and can entrench or exacerbate existing inequalities in access to land.

ขายที่ดิน 3-1-95 ไร่
Land for sale 3-1-95 Rai

(1395 ตารางวา หรือ 5585 ตารางเมตร) [1395 Sq Wa or 5585 Sq.M]

ราคา 8.9 ล้านบาท

Selling at 8.9 Million baht

ติดต่อ คุณปานดา

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ไม่จำเป็นต้อง

No agent please

