



**RESEARCH FOR RESTORING
TROPICAL FOREST ECOSYSTEMS:
A PRACTICAL GUIDE**

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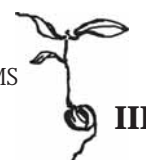
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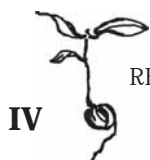


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PREFACE

Around the world, many attempts to “re-create natural” forest ecosystems on deforested land have failed. This has often been due to poorly developed techniques, as well as poor management and failure to engage local people. However, this need not be the case. This book (together with its companion volume ‘How to Plant a Forest’ (FORRU, 2006)) sets out to show how successful and innovative forest restoration strategies can be devised to suit the various ecological and socio-economic conditions represented across SE Asia.

In 2002, Chiang Mai University’s Forest Restoration Research Unit (FORRU-CMU), and its UK partner, East Malling Research (EMR), were awarded a grant by the UK’s Darwin Initiative for a 3-year project entitled “Education and training for restoring tropical forest biodiversity”. The manual, ‘How to Plant a Forest: the Principles and Practice of Restoring Tropical Forest Ecosystems’ was a major output of that project. It made available, to all those interested in restoring forest ecosystems in northern Thailand, tried and tested techniques, based on a decade of research by FORRU-CMU. Using an easily accessible format, the manual showed how the framework species concept of forest restoration has been successfully adapted to re-establish natural forest ecosystems in seasonally dry tropical areas and presented all the practical information necessary to implement a forest restoration project.

Although the manual was distributed, as an example, throughout SE Asia and translated into six languages (Thai, Chinese, Lao, Khmer, Vietnamese and English), the information presented in it was mostly applicable to the seasonally dry tropical forests of northern Thailand. Many of the techniques and the framework tree species recommended in it may not be suitable for the various ecological conditions and socio-economic circumstances that exist in other parts of tropical SE Asia.

The current title “Research for Restoring Tropical Forest Ecosystems: A Practical Guide” takes the next logical step. It presents the generic concepts and research protocols that were used to develop successful forest restoration in N. Thailand. By adapting such concepts and protocols locally to indigenous forest ecosystems and their tree floras, it should be possible to develop successful methods to restore forest ecosystems anywhere in tropical SE Asia.

This is a book for researchers. It is aimed at helping anyone involved in setting up and running a Forest Restoration Research Unit to devise a suitable framework species approach to the restoration of forest ecosystems for biodiversity conservation and/or environmental protection. It is one of the main outputs from another UK Darwin Initiative project entitled “Facilitating Forest Restoration for Biodiversity Recovery in Indochina” (2005-2008), carried out jointly by EMR, Wildlife Landscapes and FORRU-CMU and in collaboration with the International Centre for Research on Agro-forestry, China, the Forest and Wildlife Science Research Institute, Cambodia and the Forestry Research Centre, Laos.

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