Reproduced from Extracting Development: Contested Resource Frontiers in Mainland Southeast Asia,
edited by Oliver Tappe and Simon Rowedder (Singapore: ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2022). This version was
obtained electronically direct from the publisher on condition that copyright is not infringed. No part of this publication
may be reproduced without the prior permission of ISEAS Publishing.
Individual chapters are available at http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg.



The ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute (formerly Institute of Southeast Asian Studies) is an autonomous organization established in 1968. It is a regional centre dedicated to the study of socio-political, security, and economic trends and developments in Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic and economic environment. The Institute's research programmes are grouped under Regional Economic Studies (RES), Regional Strategic and Political Studies (RSPS), and Regional Social and Cultural Studies (RSCS). The Institute is also home to the ASEAN Studies Centre (ASC), the Singapore APEC Study Centre and the Temasek History Research Centre (THRC).

ISEAS Publishing, an established academic press, has issued more than 2,000 books and journals. It is the largest scholarly publisher of research about Southeast Asia from within the region. ISEAS Publishing works with many other academic and trade publishers and distributors to disseminate important research and analyses from and about Southeast Asia to the rest of the world.

Extracting Development

Contested Resource Frontiers in Mainland Southeast Asia

EDITED BY

OLIVER TAPPE · SIMON ROWEDDER



First published in Singapore in 2022 by ISEAS Publishing 30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace Singapore 119614

E-mail: publish@iseas.edu.sg *Website*: http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute.

© 2022 ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.

The responsibility for facts and opinions in this publication rests exclusively with the authors and their interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views or the policy of the publisher or its supporters.

ISEAS Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

ISBN 9789815011517 (epub)

Name(s): Tappe, Oliver, editor. | Rowedder, Simon, editor.

Title: Extracting development : contested resource frontiers in Mainland Southeast Asia / edited by Oliver Tappe and Simon Rowedder.

Description: Singapore : ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2022. | Includes

bibliographical references and index. Identifiers: ISBN 9789815011197 (soft cover) | ISBN 9789815011463 (pdf) |

Subjects: LCSH: Natural resources—Southeast Asia. | Natural resources—Political aspects—Southeast Asia.

Classification: LCC HC441 Z65E96

Cover photo: Mekong river bank, Vientiane, Lao PDR (photo by Oliver Tappe).

Cover designed by Lee Meng Hui Index compiled by Raffaie Nahar Typeset by International Typesetters Pte Ltd Printed in Singapore by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd

CONTENTS

Ack	nowledgements	vii
The	Contributors	viii
1.	Contested Resource Frontiers in Mainland Southeast Asia: An Introduction Simon Rowedder and Oliver Tappe	1
2.	Ontological Politics of the Resource Frontier: A Hydrosocial Analysis of the Mekong River in Northern Thailand Thianchai Surimas and Carl Middleton	28
3.	Reassembling Frontiers for Middle-Income Peasants: Rubber Expansion and Livelihood Ecosystem Transformation in a Northeast Thai Village Wataru Fujita	49
4.	"Only the Best Fruits for China!": Local Productions of a 'Fruit Frontier' in the Borderlands of China, Laos and Thailand Simon Rowedder	79
5.	Commodity Frontiers in Motion: Tracing the Maize Boom across the Lao-Vietnamese Borderlands Robert Cole	106

vi Contents

6.	New Frontier Spaces: Complex Entanglements and Power Relations (Re)shaping Land Governance in Laos Diana Suhardiman and Jonas Kramp	129
7.	Moving Away from the Margins? How a Chinese Hydropower Project Made a Lao Community Modern and Comfortable Floramante S.J. Ponce	143
8.	Frontier Capitalism in Colonial and Contemporary Laos: The Case of Tin Mining Oliver Tappe	172
9.	Chinese Investments and Resource Frontiers in Cambodia: Systemic Transformation <i>Vannarith Chheang</i>	198
10.	The Open Issues: Cases between Chinese Investment Companies and Local People in Myanmar Su Yin Htun	221
11.	Internationalization of RMB and Tin Ore Trade in China-Myanmar Frontier Governance: Views from Yunnan Province Dominik Mierzejewski	240
Ind	ex	261

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The book is an outcome of the workshop "Contested Resource Frontiers in Mainland Southeast Asia" held in the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore on 6 March 2020 under its Regional Social and Cultural Studies (RSCS) Programme's "China in Southeast Asia" Project. The editors wish to express their gratitude to former RSCS director Benjamin Loh and his team for making this event possible just before the COVID-19 pandemic put an end to academic life as we knew it. Thanks go to those participants of the workshop who could not join this publication project but whose insightful presentations and contributions to the discussions greatly helped us to shape our ideas on contested resource frontiers in Southeast Asia. Special thanks are reserved for new RSCS Coordinator Norshahril bin Saat for the untiring support of our publication project, Rainer Einzenberger (University of Vienna) for his helpful critical reading of the introduction chapter, and Charlotte Wagner for editorial support.

Oliver Tappe wishes to thank ISEAS for the kind hospitality and inspiring working atmosphere during his visiting fellowship in (prepandemic) Singapore. He also would like to acknowledge the support of his and other contributors' research by the Competing Regional Integrations in Southeast Asia (CRISEA) interdisciplinary research programme, funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.

Simon Rowedder wishes to express special thanks to the students at the National University of Singapore (NUS) who have attended his classes on Sino-Southeast Asian frontiers in the past couple of years. Their engaged debates and creative comments greatly contributed to the ideas developed in this book.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

Vannarith Chheang is President at the Asian Vision Institute and Visiting Fellow at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.

Robert Cole is a Research Associate of the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore; and an adviser on responsible agricultural investment at the Mekong Region Land Governance project in Vientiane, Laos.

Wataru Fujita is Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Sustainable System Sciences, Osaka Metropolitan University, Japan.

Su Yin Htun is Professor at the Department of Law, University of Mandalay, Myanmar.

Jonas Kramp works for the Land Governance Team of the German Agency of International Cooperation (GIZ).

Carl Middleton is Assistant Professor in the Graduate Studies in International Development Studies Program (MAIDS-GRID) and Director of the Center for Social Development Studies in the Faculty of Political Science of Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Dominik Mierzejewski is Associate Professor at the Department of Asian Studies, and Chair at the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Lodz, Poland.

The Contributors ix

Floramante S.J. Ponce is a PhD candidate at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany.

Simon Rowedder is Assistant Professor at the Chair of Development Politics, University of Passau, and affiliate member of the Max Weber Foundation Research Group on Borders, Mobility and New Infrastructures at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore.

Diana Suhardiman is Director of the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden/Netherlands.

Thianchai Surimas is Researcher at the Center for Social Development Studies, Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

Oliver Tappe is Senior Researcher at the Institute of Anthropology, University of Heidelberg (Germany), and Associate Fellow at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore.