

MANAGEMENT AND USE OF MELALEUCA FOREST BASED ON ECOSYSTEM APPROACH - A CASE IN GAO GIONG MELALEUCA FOREST SITE, DONG THAP PROVINCE

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Summary

Now the management of Melaleuca forests in many forest management units (FMU) have been implementing as a “single approach” means that based on mainly Melaleuca forest while other factors of wetland ecosystem such as water, soil, fauna, flora, landscape,..etc are not still concerned significantly. The Gao Giong Melaleuca Forest Management Board (MFMB) is managing 1,492.5 ha of Melaleuca forest land area which locates in Gao Giong commune territory, Cao Lanh district, Dong Thap province which belongs to the Plain of Reed, a typical ecosystem region in the Mekong Delta. The lessons learnt from Gao Giong MFMB are: (i) A strategy on integrated management based on ecosystem approach is established as an “umbrella” for all activities of protection, conservation and use of natural factors soundly; (ii) A special planning of all area in which locations of biodiversity conservation, seasonal grass land, Melaleuca forest cutting and thinning, wetland natural landscape for ecotourism is designed clearly; Melaleuca forest is managed under the sustainable plan with forest fire prevention, cutting and thinning activities; (iii) Benefits of this management way are wetland ecosystems being conserved, budget being collected from cutting and thinning forest trees and ecotourism business, income of local households in buffer zone being improved by their participation to ecosystem services and sharing benefits with Gao Giong MFMB. This study results could contribute to Melaleuca forest management in the Mekong Delta to make more effect and benefit in environment, economic and society.

Key word: *Ecosystem approach, Gao Giong, use of Melaleuca forest, Wetlands.*