

Paludiculture Practices by Smallholder Farmers in Southern Sumatra of Indonesia: Opportunities and Challenges

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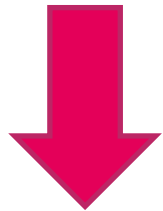
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INTRODUCTION

Peatland management practices have long been carried out by communities in Indonesia, including those who participated in the transmigration program from Java island to Sumatra.

Several transmigration areas in Sumatra are peatlands which are still overgrown with trees and shrubs.



HOW?

Paludiculture practices by smallholder farmers as a source of their livelihoods



INTRODUCTION

Local people and migrants have different ways in managing their land

Local people

- Extensive land ownership (as a landlord)
- Land management is not intensive (because they are accustomed to collect from existing natural resources, such as fishing or logging)

Migrants

- Limited land ownership (they generally get 2 ha of land from the Government)
- Intensive land management (Because they are used to farming in Java Island)

METHODOLOGY

Interview with the farmers who applied paludiculture practices in some area in Banyuasin and Ogan Komering Ilir Regency



Field surveys where people or community grow food crops by using a paludiculture system

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



At The beginning, the community experienced difficulties in managing this marginal land for planting agricultural crops.

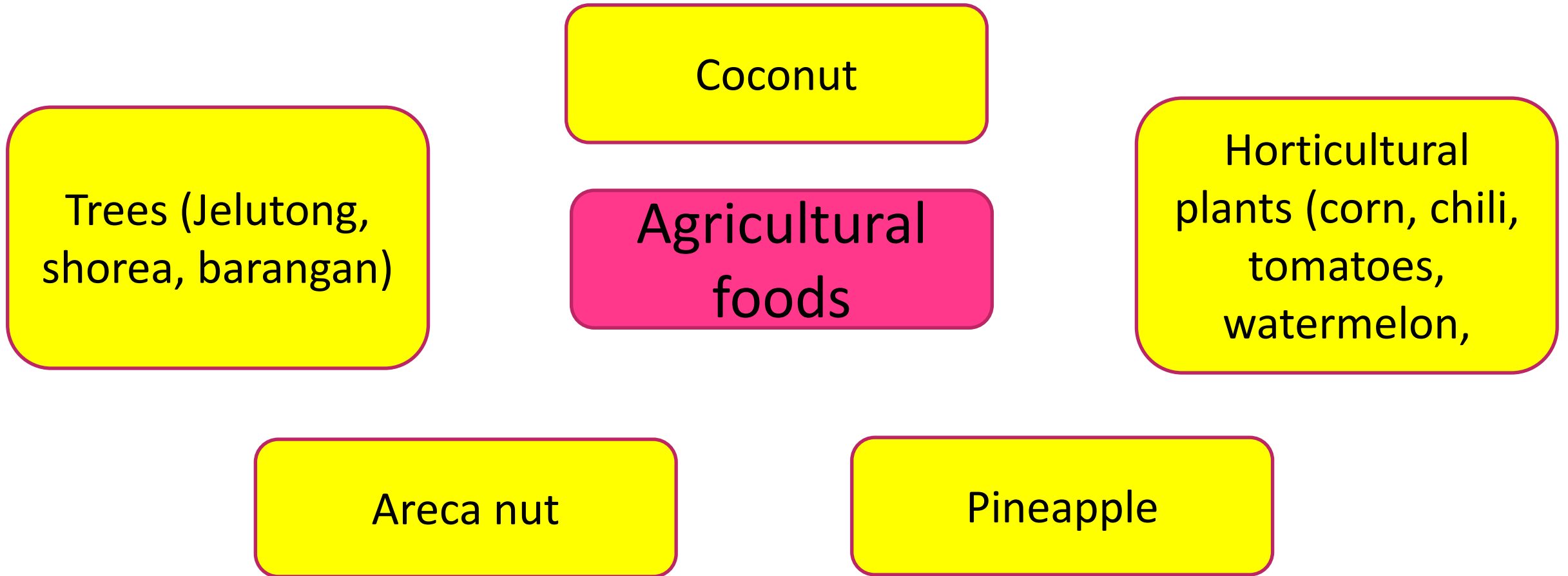


They kept trying because they had no choice to survive (flood in the rainy season and fire in the dry season)



They have to choose shallow peat to be planted. Additionally, water management must be applied so that the agricultural crops are not submerged in water during the rainy season.

- ❑ Paludiculture practices for food production is a profitable opportunity to fulfill the community's daily needs.
- ❑ The types of agricultural plants developed by the community vary widely



Rosella



Beans



**Agricultural
foods**

Chili



Corn



Tomatoes



The community has also developed agroforestry systems, for example jelutong and pineapple



Along with the development of oil palm plantations, communities also plant oil palm on their land. Some of them combine it with pineapple

Opportunities

- Paludiculture practices for food production is a profitable opportunity to fulfill the community's daily needs.
- Paludiculture on shallow peat, is carried out without draining or making drainage / canals so that it is safe for peat
- Along with agricultural crops, the community is also willing to plant trees which can be used as long-term savings and this is good for protecting peat and increasing the ability of the peat to absorb water.

Challenges

Along with the development of technology, knowledge and information, the community began to expand their land, not only on shallow peat, but also on deeper peat. So they have to build canals to drain the peatlands

Clearing land by burning is still an option for some community members because it is cheaper, practical, and it is believed that the land will become more fertile.

The community considers peat as a constraint, so they think that without peat their life will be better. Therefore they build canals using heavy equipment so that the peat can be planted.