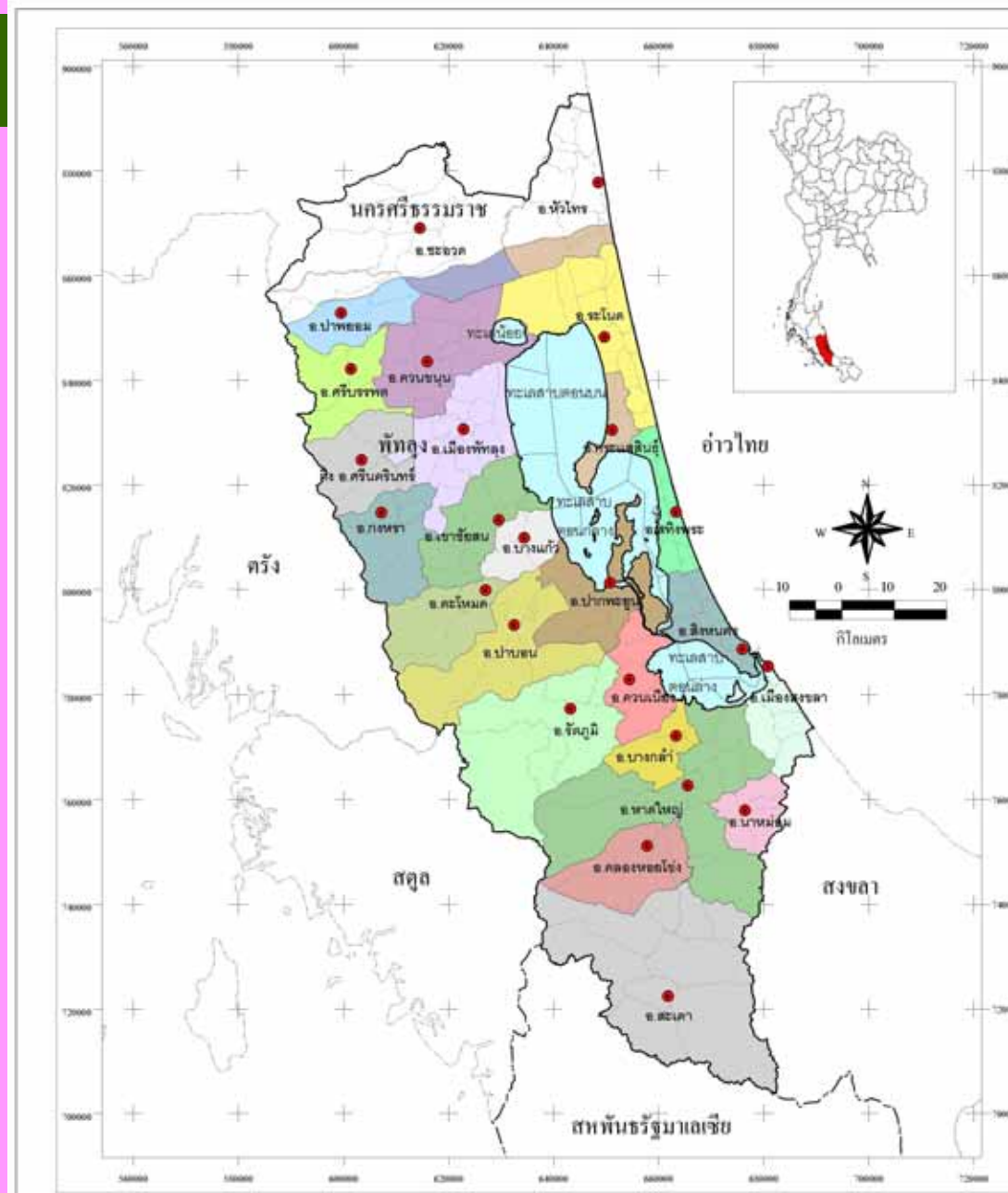


**Lessons on Master Plan Development
and Stakeholder Engagement
from the Songkhla Lake Basin Case**

Songkhla Lake Basin

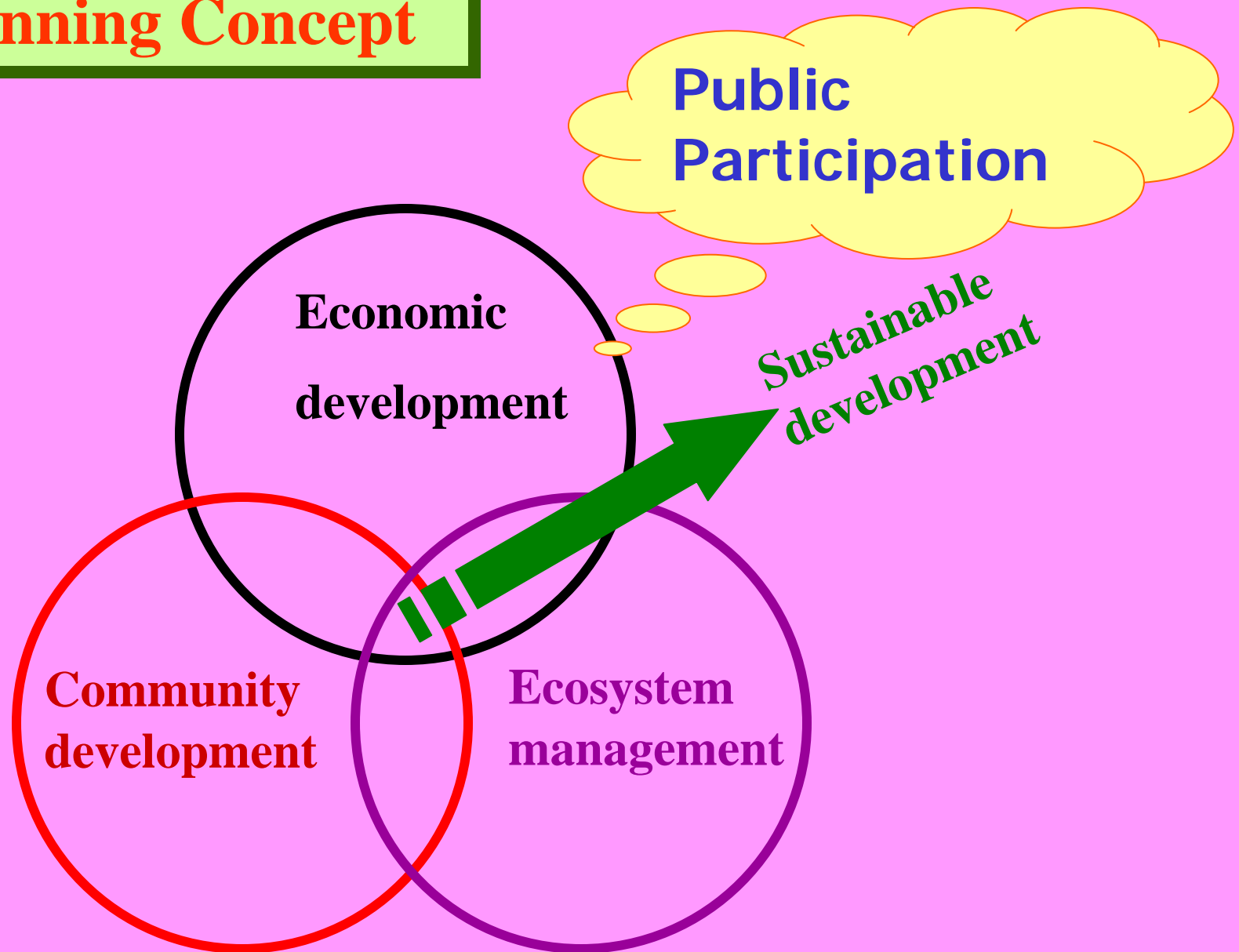
- Southern Thailand
- 8,729 sq.km.
- Lake 1,042 sq.km.
- Covers 3 provinces
- Fresh - Brackish - Saline
- 1.6+ millions inhabitants



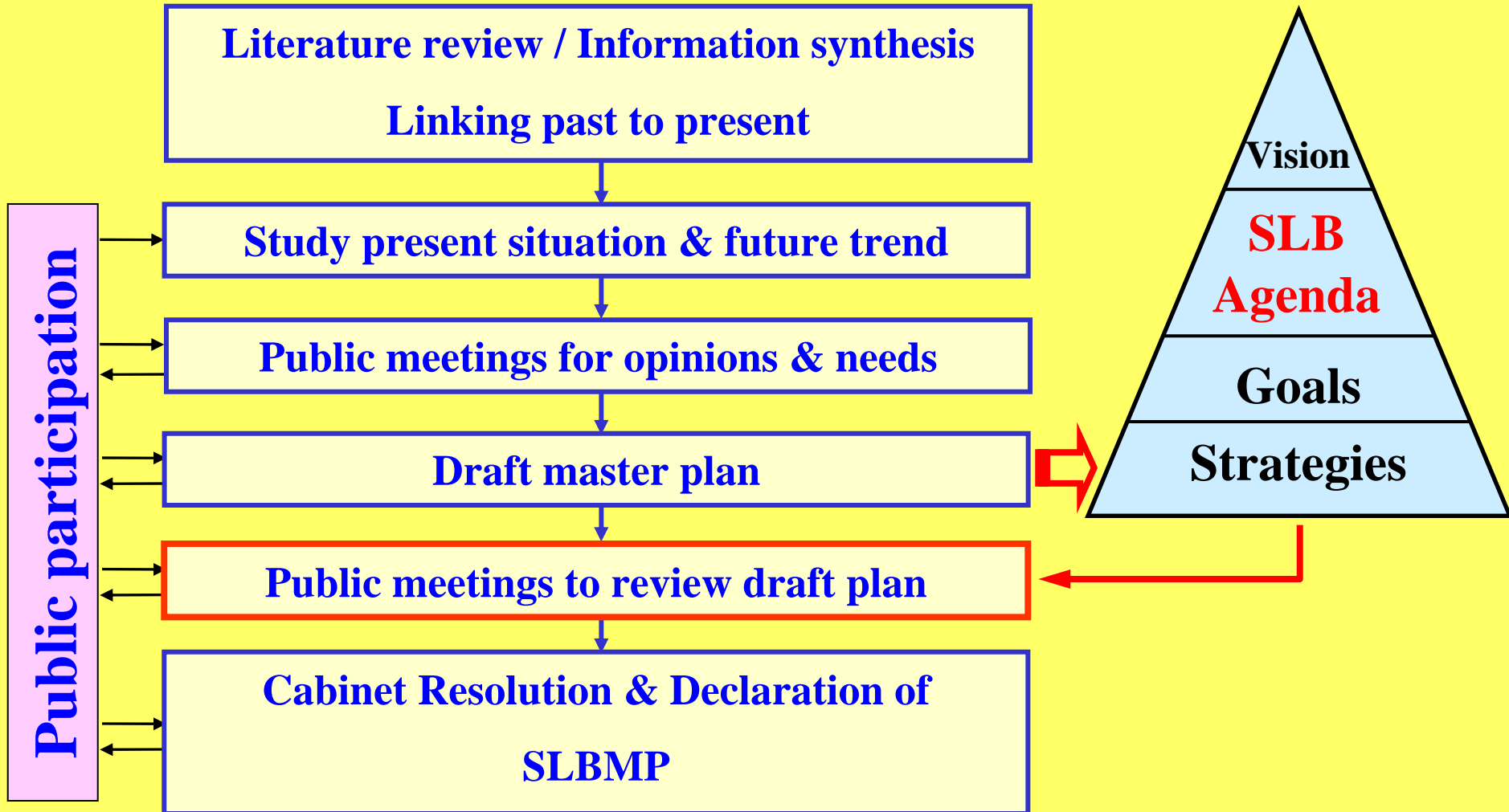
Main Issues in SLB

- Demand for freshwater
- Salt water intrusion
- Waste treatment capability
- Sedimentation
- Resource use conflicts
- Problems with previous development plans

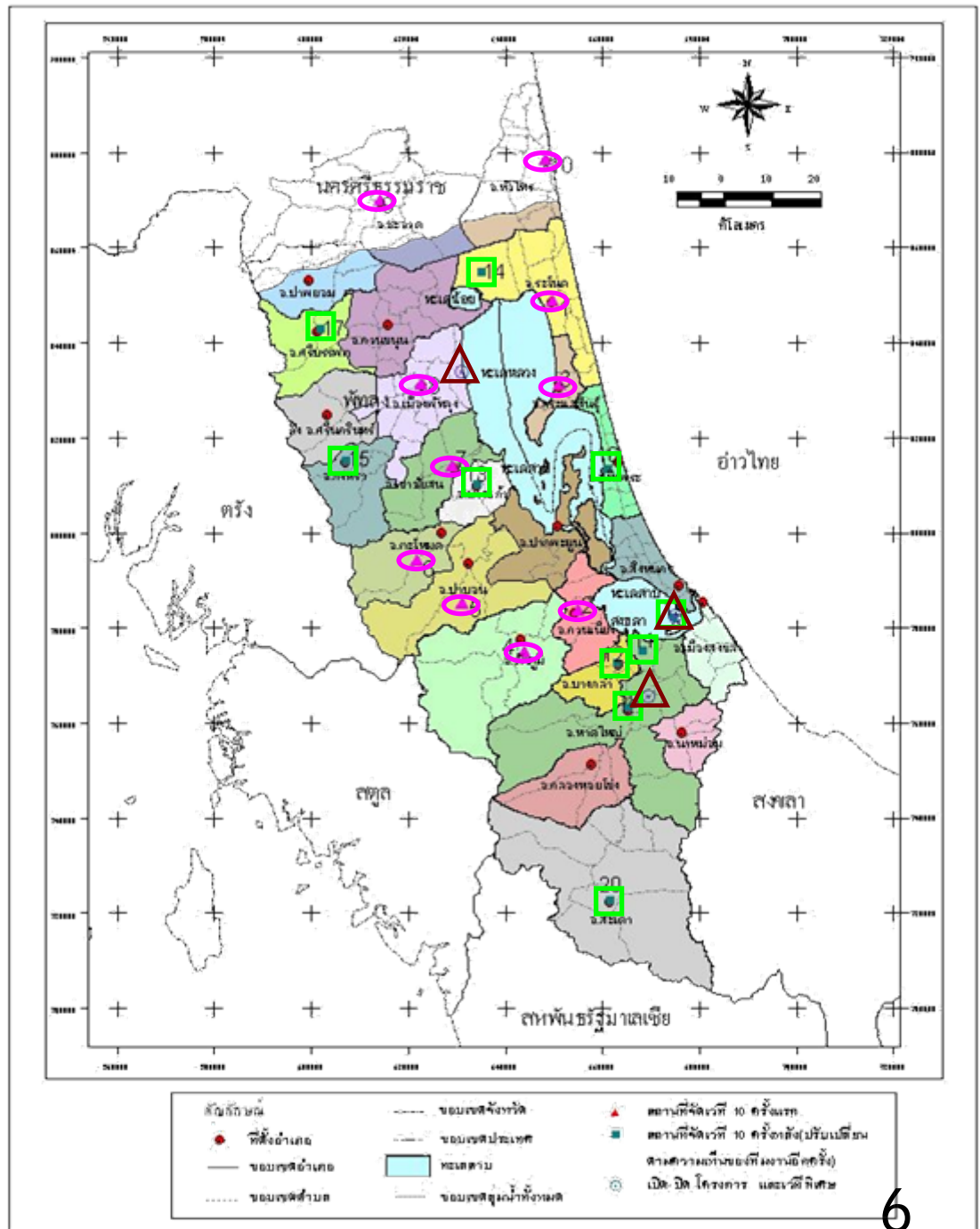
Planning Concept



Planning Process



Public meetings



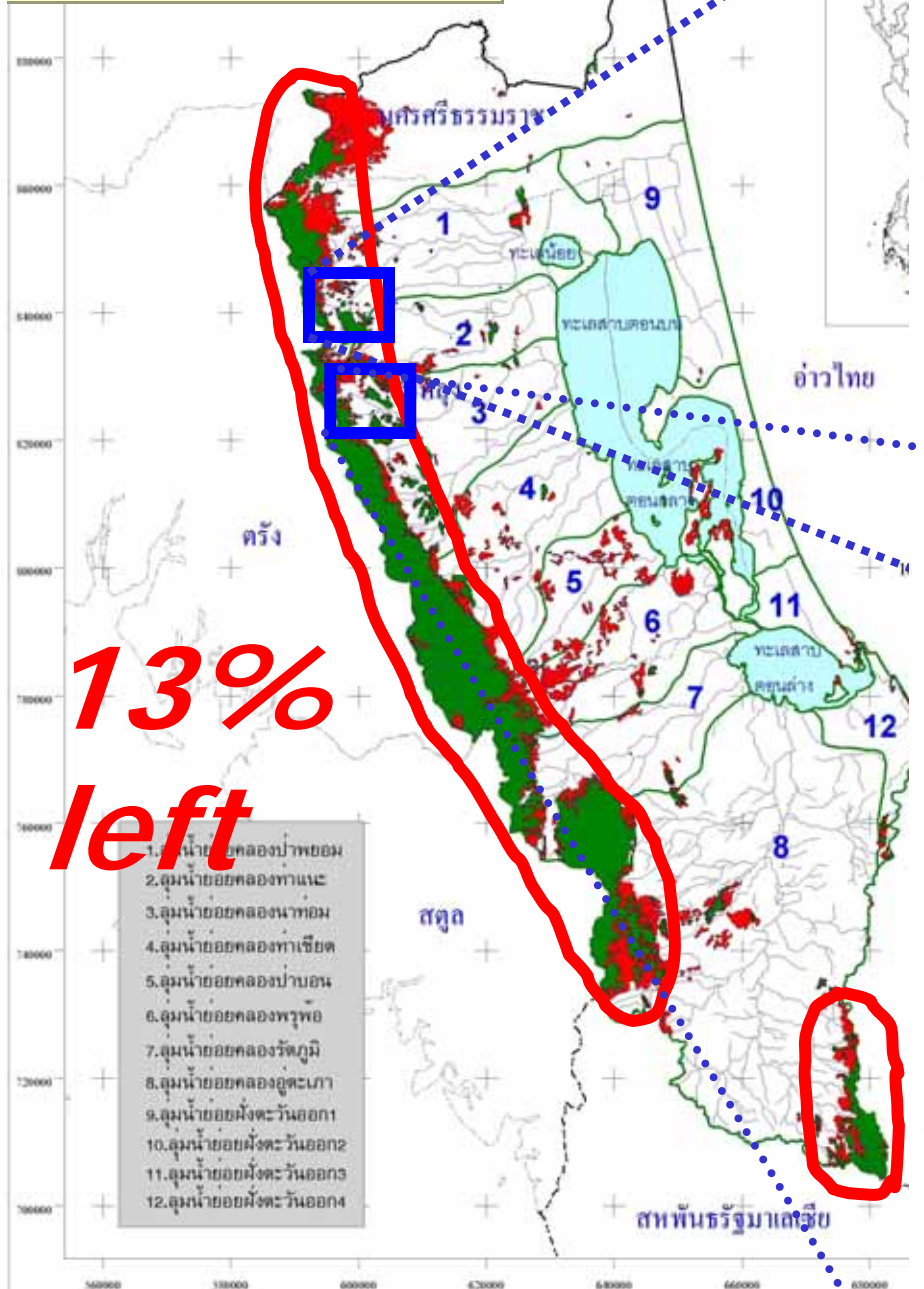
SLB Issues

- 1) Steady decline of upstream forest**
- 2) Steady decline of mangrove and peat swamp forest**
- 3) Soil erosion and sedimentation in waterways and Lake**
- 4) Loss of rare and vulnerable wildlife species**
- 5) Lack of integrated water management**
- 6) Freshwater over-pumping / saline intrusion**
- 7) Groundwater overuse**
- 8) More severe flooding**
- 9) Over-capacity fishing**

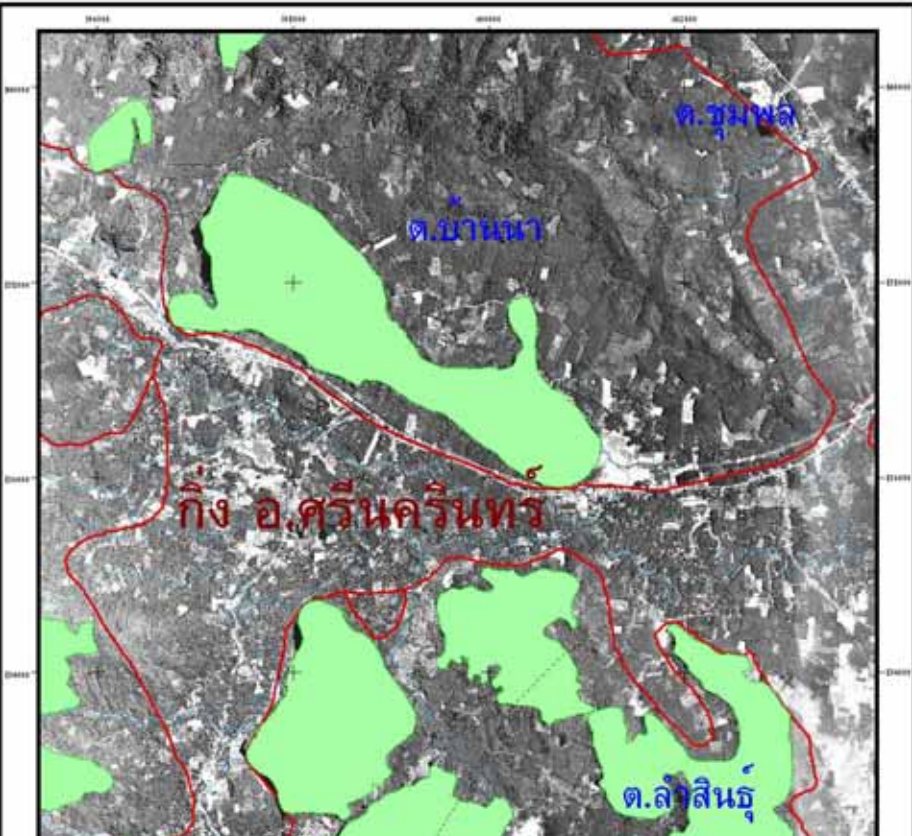
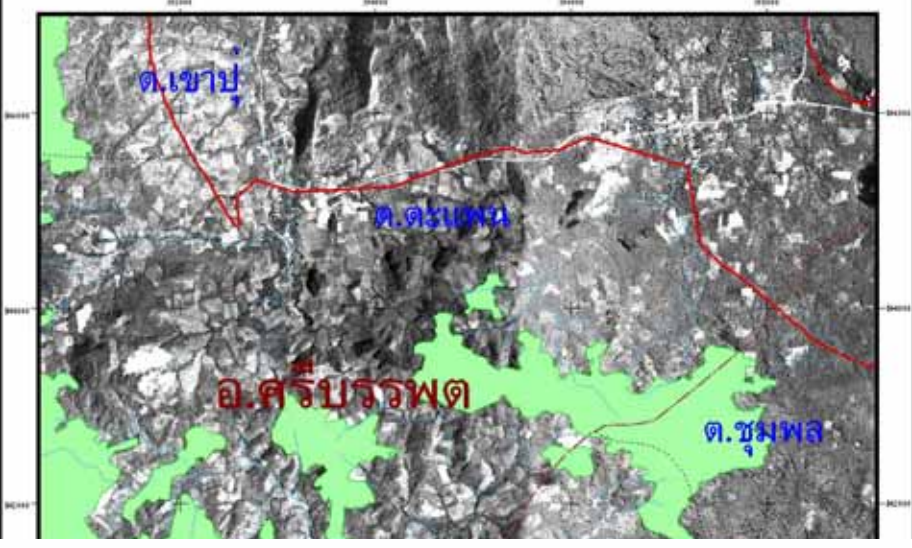
SLB Issues

- 10) Insufficient wastewater treatment facilities**
- 11) Wastewater pollution problems**
- 12) Unsanitized solid waste management**
- 13) Deterioration of water quality in waterways and lake**
- 14) Culture and local wisdom disregarded; historical / archeological sites deteriorated**
- 15) Lack of network of culture and historical / archeological sites and local wisdom**
- 16) Lack of sustainable tourism promotion**
- 17) Lack of effective management**

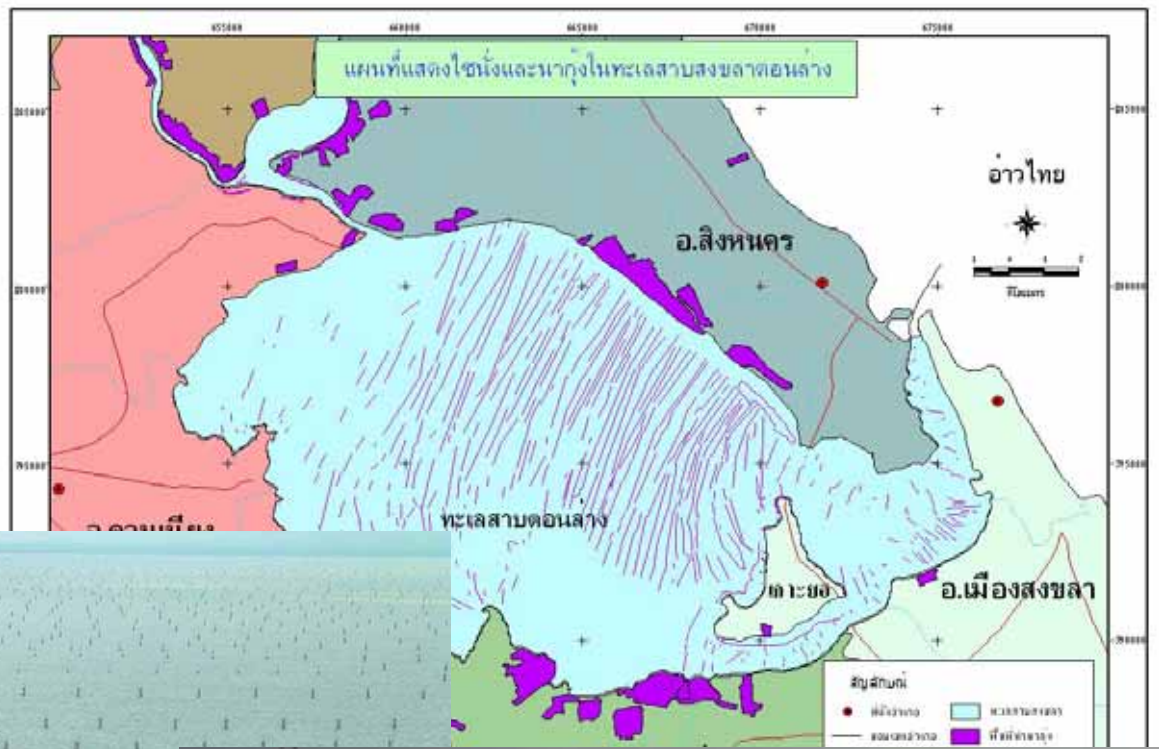
Upstream forest



**13%
left**



Fishery



SLB Development Master Plan



Stakeholder involvement

(1) Public (government) sector:

- ❑ Knowledgeable and information-rich**
- ❑ Involvement in this project was satisfactory**
- ❑ MNRE was very instrumental**
- ❑ Collaboration from other agencies varied**
- ❑ Upon completion of SLBMP, it was adopted by all government agencies as the roadmap for their respective agencies.**

Stakeholder involvement

(2) Private sector

- ❑ **Most important are industries and tourism business**
- ❑ **Very few attended the public meetings**
- ❑ **Focus group meetings were conducted**
- ❑ **Issues were redefined to create “win-win” scenarios, to make them more attractive to cooperate**

Stakeholder involvement

(3) Academics:

- ❑ **Trustworthy and respected by the public**
- ❑ **Besides the study team, other independent academics got involved**
- ❑ **Various studies on SLB issues have been conducted, but results were not conclusive. Educated judgments are necessary**
- ❑ **Scientific knowledge in SLB is sufficient for planning purposes, but more research is needed for fine-tuning**

Stakeholder involvement

(4) Local governments

- ❑ **Local governments have both authority and responsibility to look after their environment and natural resources**
- ❑ **“Rural” local governments are more active than “Urban” on that matter**
- ❑ **Active participations were also observed in the areas where there were serious environmental and social problems**

Stakeholder involvement

(5) Media:

- ❑ Notable were the contribution made by community radios**
- ❑ They help persuading people to come to the public meetings, and also play important role in building environmental awareness.**
- ❑ Though their missions were independent from the planning study, the outcomes were useful in helping people understand the environmental problems and issues.**

Stakeholder involvement

(6) Interest (Occupation) groups:

- ❑ Most notable was the fishermen group**
- ❑ In 1995 there were a little more than 8,000 households, residing in 158 villages**
- ❑ While their ways-of-life depend very much on lake water quality, their fishing gears deployed in the Lake are believed to cause problems**
- ❑ The fishermen group form a strong interest group**
- ❑ Thirty-eight focus group meetings were organized, catering over 2,000 fishermen**

Stakeholder involvement

(7) NGO

- ❑ **There are several capable NGOs working in SLB. There are NGOs which look after upstream forest, mid-stream forest, downstream forest, fishery, among other things.**
- ❑ **Their participations were helpful.**

Stakeholder involvement

(8) General public / community / people

- ❑ All 25 public meetings basin-wide were very well received by general public**
- ❑ Several conflicts were brought into the meetings. Some were resolved within single meetings, others demanded a great deal of information and scientific reasoning, not to mention heating debates.**
- ❑ In most parts of SLB, there seemed to be several respectable natural leaders well established, who can act as mediators.**

Conclusions on Participation

- **Songkhla Lake Basin planning is best viewed as a continuing process rather than a path to the final (“master”) document**
- **Success will depend on stakeholders’ willingness to support the planning effort and to comply with its recommendations**
- **Support requires participation in both analysis and deliberation, continuing review, trust building, and selection of appropriate process**

Conclusions on Participation

- **Strong stakeholder involvement led to a strong sense of ownership towards the SLBMP. They are responsible to face the risk of unpredictable outcome, and ready to update and adjust the plan when necessary.**
- **The government agencies involved were willing to adopt the SLBMP as their guiding plan for their respective agencies' action plans, having understood that it reflected the real need of the people in the Basin, let alone supported by strong technical analysis.**
- **It should also be noted that public needs, goals and priorities do change with time, especially when quality of life has improved.**

Ways for Improvement

- **Level of public participation should be enhanced. A mechanism should be so designed that public update the SLBMP themselves, while having government technocrats and academics serving as their assistants.**
- **SLBMP should provide a mechanism for self-supporting selected priority alternatives, so that there are no budgeting problem.**
- **Government must make decentralization of authority a reality.**
- **Songkhla Lake Authority (SLA) should be established.**