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## **LAND POLICIES FOR UPLAND CAMBODIA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND IMPACTS ON LAND USE**

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Contributed paper prepared for presentation at the 58th AARES Annual Conference,  
Port Macquarie, New South Wales, February 4-7, 2014

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# LAND POLICIES FOR UPLAND CAMBODIA: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND IMPACTS ON LAND USE

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**BACKGROUND** Land concession was officially issued under the Land law 2001 of Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) [1] that has generally affected the forest resources, environment, livelihoods and culture of indigenous peoples (IPs) in Mondul Kiri province. This dual land situation is likely to generate important migrations that have forced villagers to limit traditional cultivation techniques in favor of more modern, yet more risky, agricultural practices [2]. Thus, this study was conducted aimed at examining the major changes in the public land policies and strategies in Mondul Kiri framing from the 1980s, and their impacts on the local land use and land conflicts.

**METHODOLOGY** The present study was conducted in Pu Radet village, Sre Ampum commune, Pech Chreda district, Mondul Kiri province (Fig. 1). Desk-based research and field survey was employed, mainly through focus group discussion (FGD), key informant interview and household survey, whereas participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tool was used for historical mapping. Twenty-one (21) household heads were randomly selected to gather the basic information on the changes over time of land use history in study area and the movement activities of each period (1980-1990, 1991-2005, 2006-2010, 2011-present).

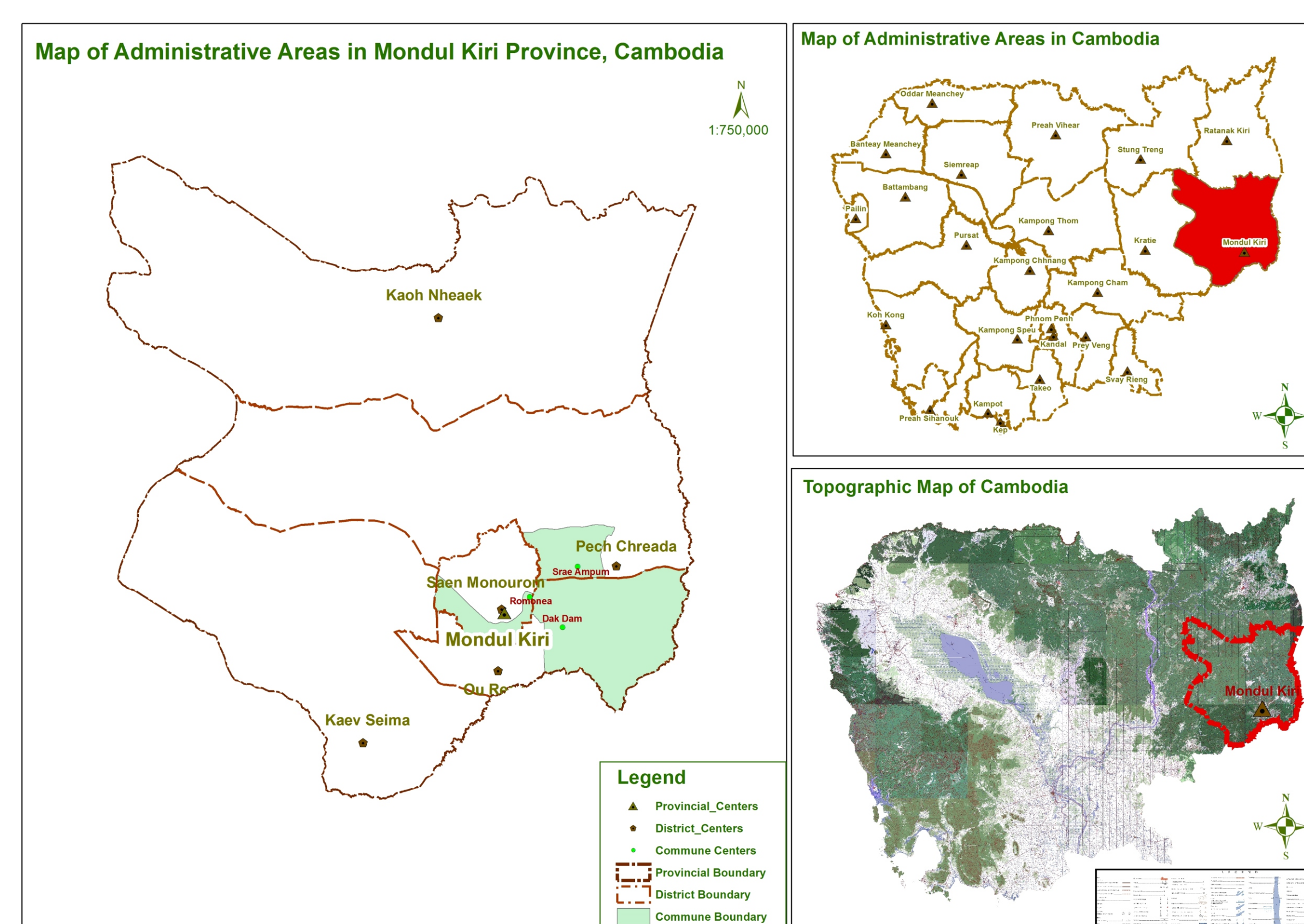
**FINDINGS** In 2002-2012, the population has been increased in Mondul Kiri province, from 40,194 to 70,439 people, largely due to demographic movement of people from lowland provinces [3]. As a result, spontaneous migration, land title, infrastructure development and economic concession have highly affected land use changes (Fig. 2) [4-6]. Based on the historical timeline, the most remarkable of changes in land use, natural resource degradations (e.g. less non-timber forest products-NTFPs and wildlife) and ways of life of the IPs significantly started from 2006 when numbers of concession companies have been tremendously increased and the infrastructure developed (Fig. 3). From 2009-present, land became saturated and limited for vacant land. Moreover, a number of land conflicts and issues have apparently been occurred especially when Directive 01BB instruction implemented in 2012. The IPs would have only private individual land title but there was no communal land title for the Pu Radet community since they sold the shifting cultivation lands, and some parts of land were taken by land concession and community forestry. Due to forest depletion, traditional land practices have been largely reduced. Modern equipments and materials have significantly been introduced to the community.

**CONCLUSION** The illustration of historical summary of Pu Radet community is seemed to provide a good picture for future development plan especially for sustainable land use management. In order to address concerns with land use changes, the involved stakeholders, particularly the government should provide full and transparent education to local beneficiaries and students on land tenure and dissemination information. Furthermore, land use projection should be taken into consideration in strategic plan at provincial level to ensure food security due to development trends in regional growth now indicate an increased demand for labor in industrial plantations.

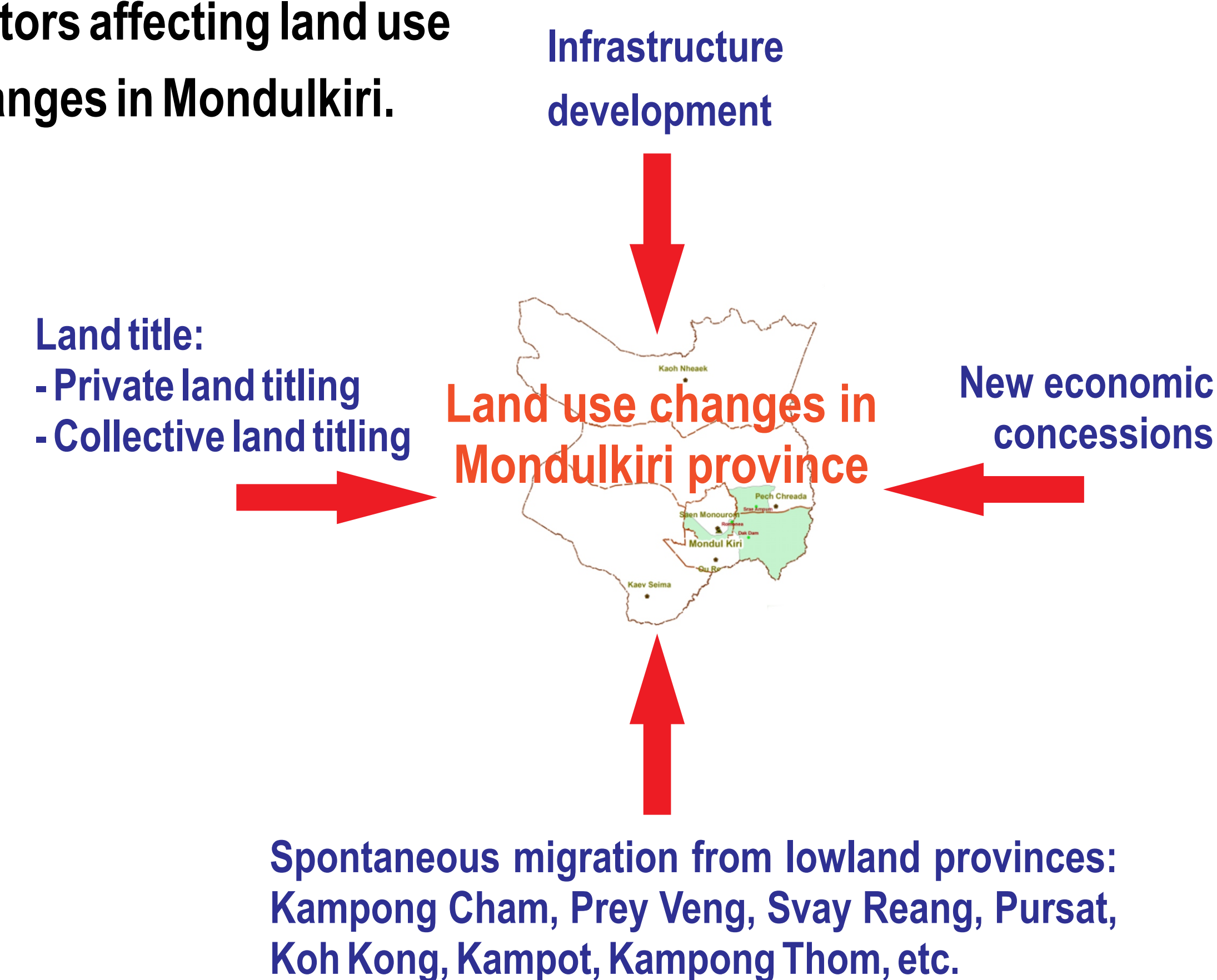
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**ACKNOWLEDGMENT** This research was supported by project No. 182724-EM-1-2010-1-CZ-ERAMUNDUS-EMA21-L12 under Erasmus Mundus Partnerships Action 2 and Asia-Link Programmes.

**Fig. 1** Map of study site in Mondul Kiri province, Cambodia.



**Fig. 2** Factors affecting land use changes in Mondul Kiri.



**Fig. 3** Historical summary of Pu Radet community.

