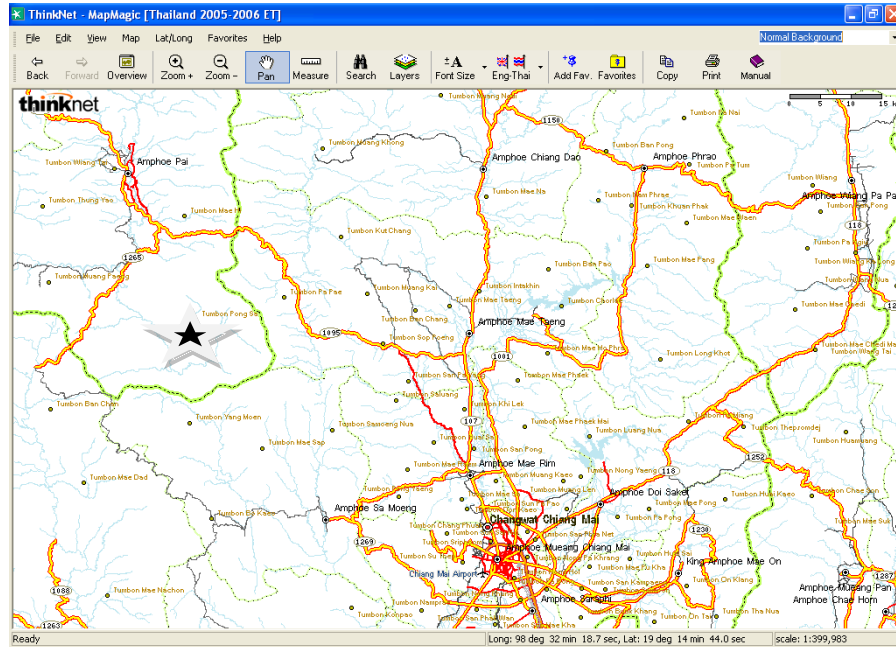


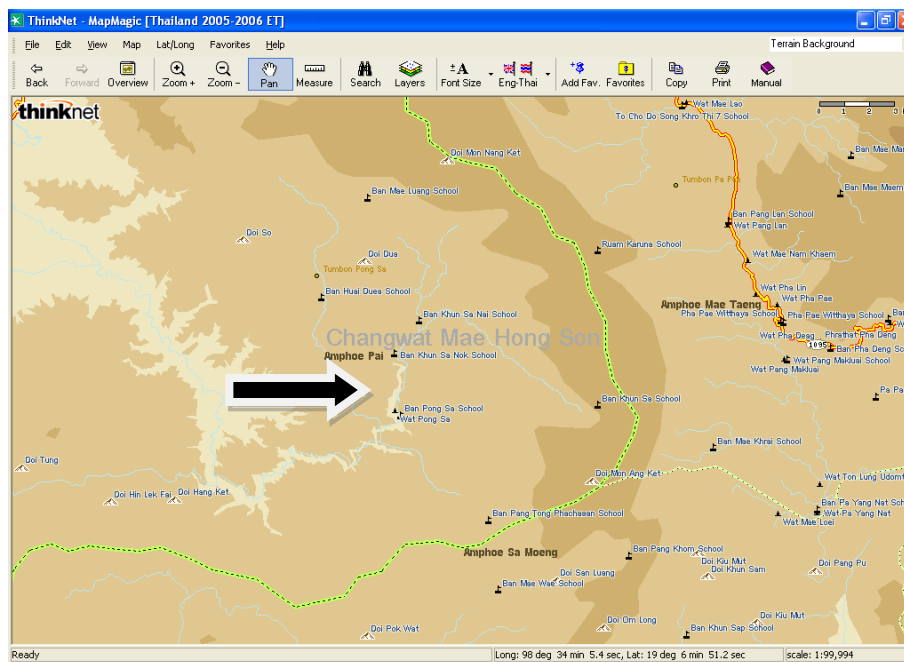
Ban Khunsa Nok Village and Tambon Pongsa School Northern Thailand

Ban Khunsa Nok - Tambon Pongsa is located in Northern Thailand in Pai District. The village is situated in a valley between two of the highest mountains in Thailand - Doi Mae Ya and Doi Mon Ang Ket.



Longitude: 98-34-10

Latitude: 19-06-52





Although the village is just across the border with Mae Hong Son province it can only be reached from the Chiang Mai side. A steep road leads from Pa Pae up the mountain to an altitude of 1700m and then down to the valley. The road is in a very bad condition as the Mae Taeng municipality sees no reason to repair a road that leads to villages which are not under their jurisdiction.

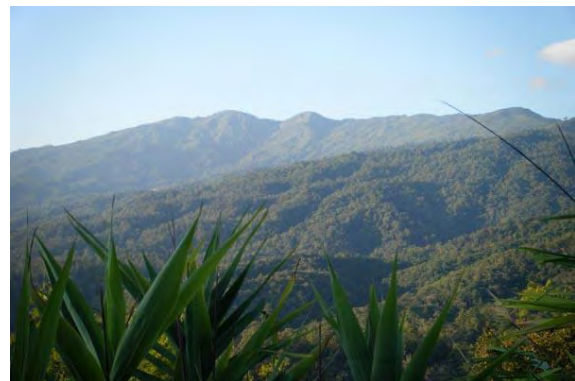
Ban Khunsa Nok is originally a hill tribe village. They are from the Karen tribe who originated from Burma and many of them were converted to Christianity by the British Missionaries. Apart from rice and vegetables, they grew poppies for opium production until the authorities prohibited this. Alternatively the Thai Government implemented a reforestation project which ran from 1975 -1990 which provided paid work for the hill tribe people.

The father of Saokham (Ket) Tejamang (the wife of RCES President Jan Abbink) worked as a supervisor and the family moved from Pa Pae to a camp in the mountains. They had a tree nursery from where the trees were planted on the mountain slopes. After completing the project they were offered land in Khunsa to build a house. Ket's mother still lives there with her sister and two young nephews and we visit them twice a year (in April and October or December).

At current there are approximately 50 households in Ban Khunsa Nok and the neighbouring village of Huay Lai , most of them live in very basic wooden huts with a roof made of leaves. Many households consist of elderly grandparents who take care of their grandchildren of which the parents have migrated to the cities to find work. Only a few houses have electricity and blackouts, sometimes for several days are quite common. There is a village water system which comes from a river which used to be quite clean but is now rather polluted and not suitable for drinking. Where and when possible they collect rainwater for drinking purposes.



Typical hill tribe dwelling



The mountains surrounding Ban Khun Sa Nok

Presentation of 50 drip filters to households in Ban Khunsa Nok & Huay Lai - Sunday April 17th 2011.



50 filters ready to be given to the families



Nina Abbink explains the system to the village headmen



The village headman calls out the names of the families from a list he has prepared and Ket Abbink presents the villagers with their drip filter.





Young and old are happy that they will have clean and safe water to drink!



A villager proudly shows the stand he has made for the filter and tastes the water

Presentation of 10 drip filters to Pongsa School – Monday April 18th 2011

The Government School in Tambon Pongsa (Kindergarten - Secondary 3) caters to 200 children from the surrounding villages, including Khunsa Nok & Huay Lai.



About 10 years ago some new classrooms were built but the canteen is still in an old wooden building.



Jan & Carl assembling the filters

Ket explains how to use and maintain the filters to the principal.

They will keep the filters in safe storage until the school opens again in May after the summer holidays.



Jan & Carl present the monk of the Huay Lai temple with a drip filter.