



## **PL 0**

**SETTING A NEW HEALTH AGENDA - AT THE NEXUS OF CLIMATE CHANGE,  
ENVIRONMENT, AND BIODIVERSITY**

## | BACKGROUND

## | OBJECTIVES

Setting the scene to PMAC 2023



Panelist / Keynote

## Banthoon Lamsam

*Chairman Emeritus*

KASIKORNBANK

Thailand

A former banker and a part-time writer, presently, Mr. Banthoon Lamsam has shifted himself to be fully committed as a 'conservator of Nan pristine headwater forest'. Mr. Lamsam was the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of KASIKORNBANK until 2020.

Since 1992 which Mr. Lamsam had been named as President of the bank, he has been renowned for applying process re-engineering to uplift the organization's standards to be in-line with international level. With his farsighted vision in applying the re-engineering in advance, he was able to lead KASIKORNBANK prevailing through the Asian financial crisis in 1997 to become one of the leading banks in Thailand.

After 30 years of managing KASIKORNBANK, Mr. Lamsam, in 2020, announced his resignation from all board and executive positions of the bank to dedicate his time to solving the problem of deforestation in Nan province, his new adopted hometown. In doing so, he had spent time getting to know and deconstruct the problem to find the root of it. Mr. Lamsam found that deforestation is not the real problem but people's way of making a living in the forest is. Hence, he has been devoting himself to solve this 'people problem' in order to restore Nan pristine headwater forest.

As a resident of Nan province, Mr. Lamsam raised the issue to the Government. Subsequently, he was granted unprecedented permission from the Thai government to tackle it in a public-private task force structure. Under his guidance, Mr. Lamsam has simultaneously implemented 2 strategies to restore Nan forest: a mandatory approach and a game changer approach.

Seeing that good health and well-being are necessary conditions for increasing standards of living and paving the way out of poverty, the first and mandatory strategy is to give out health support to Nan villagers. Mr. Lamsam, himself, has been visiting all of the 170 healthcare units in Nan province to ensure that Nan people have at least sufficient healthcare facilities to perform the duty. Rak Pa Nan Foundation supplies financial support for this effort.

The second strategy he is implementing and believes to be a 'game changer' is the Non-Timber Forest Product (NTFP), to be specific, 'medicinal plants', which can harmoniously co-exist with the forest. Mr. Lamsam, thereafter, established K Agro-innovate Institute (KAI), under KASIKORNTHAI Foundation, to build an end-to-end value chain of medicine from plants, in order to create economic value to be utilized in uplifting Nan villagers' life.

Nonetheless, tackling this colossal problem is not a one-man show. In order to build, not only an end-to-end, but also a 'multi-disciplinary' value chain for sustainable reforestation, Mr. Lamsam has been spending his time to influence and inspire other key players along the value chain: those include government agencies, particularly in the medical, pharmaceutical and public healthcare fields, academic institutions and other like-minded private entrepreneurs. With all of the efforts Mr. Lamsam has been putting into the work, he sets his heart on safeguarding Nan, the pristine headwater forest of the world, to be a greener and livable place for the future generations.

Mr. Banthoon Lamsam received his Bachelor's Degree in Chemical Engineering from Princeton University and his MBA from Harvard University. After retirement from KASIKORNBANK, the board bestowed on him the honorary title of "Chairman Emeritus".