

GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION

1. Forest Area Thailand has total area of 320 million rai. Northern and northeastern regions are jointly biggest region with total area of about 106 million rai each, followed by southern (44 million rai), central (42 million rai) and eastern region (23 million rai) respectively.

In 1961, 53.3 per cent of the country's area is forest with northern region having highest ratio of forest area (68.5% of total area), followed by eastern region (58%), central region (53%), northeastern (42%) and southern (42%) respectively. However, ratio of forest are dropped remarkably to 28.0 per cent in 1988 with northern region still having highest ration (47%) followed by central (25%), eastern (22%), southern (21%) and northeastern (14%) respectively.

It is seen that during 1961-1988, forests in northeastern and eastern regions had been severely destroyed as proportion of forest area had been reduced from 42 and 58 per cent to only 14 and 22 per cent respectively. During the same period, half of forests in central and southern regions had been destroyed with proportion of forest area being reduced from 53 and 42 per cent to 25 and 21 per cent respectively. Northern region is the region with lowest rate of deforestation as proportion of forest area had been reduced from 69 per cent in 1961 to 47 per cent in 1988.