

# Smoke across mainland Southeast Asia



There was a time when I spent a great deal of energy wandering around upland areas of mainland Southeast Asia dealing with agricultural topics. I haven't done it for years. Nonetheless some of my fondest memories coalesce around the endlessly fascinating interactions between people and the land found in this region.

Going through a collection of old photos I stumbled upon this one from 2005. It shows a hillside ablaze in Burma's Shan State. The fire was set deliberately, all part of the annual cycle of shifting cultivation, also known as swidden cultivation.

In the months ahead fires like this one will be a common sight in upland areas across the region. Readers wanting to know more about this agricultural practice may find [this](#) a good place to start.