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Voices from the Forest

Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia

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Fail me Knot!

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Voices from the Forest

Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia (NTFP-EP) is a collaborative network of over 60 civil society organizations (CSOs) working with forest-based communities to strengthen their capacity in the sustainable management of natural resources in the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Cambodia, with initial contacts made in Bangladesh.

Voices from the Forest is the official newsletter of NTFP-EP. It is released biannually and contains regional and country forests and people updates from the NTFP-EP network.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Maria Cristina Guerrero
Earl Paulo Diaz
Tanya Conlu

CONTRIBUTORS

Jenne de Beer, Femy Pinto, Joy Torres, Erwin Diloy, Phan Channa Katherine Mana-Galido, Olivia Melendrez, Snehlata Nath, Ched Limsa, Teny Putri, Natasya Muliandari, Dominic Langat, Matek Geram, Irawan Sihombing, Diweng Bakir, Manny Uy, Nicolas Savajol, Mathew John, Ken Piseth

CONTACT US!

Your queries, comments and contributions are most welcome! Please contact us at:

Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia (NTFP-EP)

92 Masikap Extension,
Barangay Central
Diliman, Quezon City 1100,
Philippines

+ 63 2 920 42 01
+ 63 2 426 27 57
info@ntfp.org
facebook.com/ntfpep
twitter.com/ntfp_ep

WWW.NTFP.ORG

editor's notes

Greetings Voices readers!

We have a jam-packed issue for you this time!

The cover photo which we label "Male stripper!" actually has nothing to do with nocturnal adventures but is all about the recent **First Asian Ikat Weavers Conference** that was held in Lake Sebu, Philippines. Dayak Iban, Diweng Bakir, tests his brawn on the abaca (Musa textilis) stripping machine and realizes its not so easy after all (Full article, page 16).

This issue features 4 exchange visits sponsored by the International Labor Organization (ILO) in support of the ILO Convention 169 on indigenous peoples rights, rightly entitled **"Rights and Resources, Culture and Commerce"** (Pages 5-9). In addition, this issue is filled with pages on **Food from the Forest Festivals and Recipes**. The NTFP-Task Force in the Philippines, ably led by former NTFP-EP Director, Jenne de Beer supported MAHIFO, the Eata peoples organization in Malay, Panay in the Central Visayas in the successful food festival and forum entitled **"Dream of All Eata"** (Pages 10-11). Traveling to the Mekong region, we find that NTFP-EP Cambodia, WWF and Nomad RSI are also supporting similar initiatives on **Bunong wild food knowledge and culinary arts!** (Pages 18-19). For the health buffs, discover a special ingredient used as a wild substitute for MSG!

India's contribution to this issue is **"The Tiger and the Broom"** which describes initiatives where wildlife and people utilizing sustainable harvesting practices can co-exist (Page 15). Sustainability is also the topic for discussion in the **rattan certification workshop** in Indonesia where a more participatory system is being proposed (Page 17).

Something to celebrate in this issue is the number of NTFP-EP partners, contacts and friends that are being recognized for their advocacy for forest conservation and for forest peoples. Congratulations to **Amay Mantangkilan Cumatang, Arjun Singh Nag, Center for Biodiversity and Development, and Fr. Edu Gariguez!**

At the ASEAN level looks like exciting things are happening too as civil society engagement in the forestry and agriculture field is gaining attention (Page 13).

Read and be inspired!

NTFP-EP SECRETARIAT

Executive Director **Maria Cristina Guerrero**
Programme Development Officer **Tanya Conlu**
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Sarawak Community Development Officer **Dominic Langat**
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Administrative Assistant **Laarni Ocampo**
Assistant Programme Officer for Indonesia **Natasya Muliandari**

SAULOG! CELEBRATING AN ANCIENT CULTURE AND WAY OF LIFE IN THE WESTERN VISAYAS

Written by: Earl Paulo Diaz

The hunter-gatherer indigenous group 'Negritos' have walked the lands of the Philippines for more than 30,000 years already and is considered its most ancient civilization. Currently classified into smaller subdivisions e.g. Eata, Ati, Ayta and the Batak, all groups live in harmony with the environment. In the face of modernization however, their natural lifestyles face the threat of cultural loss.

February was a momentous month as immediately after a hugely successful Dream of All Aeta Festival (see pages 10-11) .

NTFP-TF together with the Negros Museum showcased the ancient Negrito Culture through "Saulog! Celebrating an Ancient Culture and Way of life in the Western Visayas" an exhibition that highlights the proud aspect of the Visayan heritage. It features a collection of photographs from the festivals and artifacts that distinctly display the Negrito way of life: musical instruments, bow and arrows, hamock, handicrafts and food products.

The successful launching night was attended not only by leaders and representatives of different Negrito groups but also by a diverse mix of people from different walks of life. Tanya Lopez, Museum Director, saw the potential of Ati products and decided to brew a trading partnership with the Negros Museum. According to her, the Ati community will have a market day ("Dulhog" - which means bringing down of the products) in the Negros Museum on a regular basis. The exhibit will run until the end of the National Heritage Month (May) in Bacolod, Philippines.

VIETNAM HERITAGE CENTER PLANNING

Written by: Ched Limsa

Last March 14-21, 2012, I was given the chance to join the team of Jenne de Beer (NTFP-EP) Dr. Itie Van Hout (KIT), Dr. Luu Hong Truong (CBD) and Vu Ngoc Long (CBD) for a learning visit in Vietnam.

The purpose of that visit was to brainstorm with different provincial departments regarding the proposed project of Center for Biodiversity and Development (CBD) to facilitate the establishment of a center to encourage the preservation, revitalization and promotion of intangible and tangible cultural heritage (non-timber forest products) of the ethnic minorities of Vietnam. This "non-timber forest product" museum will also promote awareness and discussion of indigenous people's intrinsic relationship with the nature for economic and social-cultural development. We met and exchange ideas with the head of Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Department of Ethics and Mountains, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Peoples Committee of two (2) provinces of Lam Dong and Binh Thuan. We also visited Museum of Lam Dong, Museum of Biology, Bidoup-Nui Ba national Park, the JICA project on ecotourism Lat Village and Takou Nature Reserve/Takou Tourism Park. It was a fruitful and promising discussion because almost all of the department heads expressed their support and commitment to CBD's plan. Mr Lee Van Huong, Director of Bidoup-Nui Ba national Park offered an area within the park for the heritage center and the head of the Takou Nature Reserve Park also offered another area for the center. The last day activity was summing up discussions and planning.

Thanks to NTFP-EP and CBD who invited me to be part of the team. I learned a lot!

LEARNING FROM CRAFTS TRAILBLAZERS

Written by: Teny Putri

October 2011 , NTFP EP Indonesia staff and partners Merry Tobing, Teny Putri, Nurul Meutia and Alphaeus Krispinus joined a visit to NTFP Task Force's (NTFP-TF) marketing arm, CustomMade Crafts Center (CMCC). The purpose of the learning visit program was to learn effective marketing strategies, enterprise operations and quality management for the Indonesia heritage handbag line - Borneo Chic.

The CMCC staff and partners shared lots of insights to the enthusiastic team: Ruth Canlas, Beng Camba and Lulu Delgado-Cruz shared with the participants about the importance of quality control and standardization in order for them to be competitive in local and international markets. Bing Decena demonstrated to them how to negotiate with clients like the Philippines' Department of Tourism. The team also had a first-hand experience of making stationeries: from counting raw materials to computing product costs under the tutelage of Met Sta. Maria. In their meeting with an NTFP-TF partner, Noime Solia, they learned about the challenges and opportunities that weavers face today.

A lot of things have been learned from the exchange visit, which could help improve quality control and product management systems in Indonesia's crafts marketing efforts. Hopes were high for the Indonesian programme as they returned home after their insightful visit to the Philippines!

AWAKENING THE DRAGON: DRAGON'S BLOOD CULTIVATION

Written by: Natasya Muliandari

Last February NTFP-EP, together with partners from the district of Sintang, West Kalimantan, Sagiman and Juliana, visited Lamban Sigatal-Jambi (Indonesia) to see and learn about Lamban Sigatal's success story in cultivating jernang.

Jernang (*Daemonorops draco*) is a genus of rattan, its fruit produces red resin. This species is also known as dragon's blood. In Sintang the resin is used as natural dye for handicraft products, while in Lamban Sigatal the resin is traded for a valuable price.

Unfortunately "jernang" is more and more difficult to find. Therefore, in 2006, 13 people in Lamban Sigatal established a community group, called Bangko Koneng Jaya (BKJ), and started to plant "jernang". With local NGO assistance from Yayasan Gita Buana, the group started the initiative and planted jernang in a 10 hectare demonstration plot. This initiative was followed by other people in community starting to plant jernang as well in their backyard. Now BKJ is waiting for their first harvest by next August.

From this field visit, Sagiman and Juliana got valuable experience from the Lamban Sigatal community. Learning about jernang planting is important for them as there is a new market for naturally dyed baskets in Jakarta. Hopefully they can implement the techniques they learned and help the weavers of Sintang to do the same to preserve their jernang and its value for their community.

KNOWLEDGE AND EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP: ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN REDD+

Written by: Joy Torres

Flora and Fauna International (FFI) is implementing a project entitled 'Developing Community Carbon Pools for REDD, plus enhancing forest carbon stock (REDD+) project in selected ASEAN countries'. The project seeks to strengthen active participation of local governments and local communities in REDD+ projects in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. The project will support national and sub-national policies that strengthen the role of local communities in REDD+ initiatives. The project will also support community tenure, equitable benefit sharing and biodiversity co-benefits.

From 22-27 February the FFI project team and partners headed to Puerto Princesa and Quezon, Palawan, Philippines for a four-day workshop entitled "Knowledge and Empowerment: Processes and Mechanisms to ensure meaningful, effective community participation in REDD+".

The workshop sessions were very animated. Such themes as Community Participation in REDD+, Social Safeguards, Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) and Clarifying Carbon rights were discussed thoroughly. On the third day, a field visit was made to the Tagbanua Ancestral Domain within the Victoria Anepahan Mountain Range (Key biodiversity Area) in Aramaywan, Quezon, Palawan. The community's staunch defense against a nearby mining company was evident as they could still boast of good quality forest. One community also related their joy in installing a water system in their area facilitated by the project and the local government. This offered insights on strategies to cooperative action in sustainable development. The final workshop session provided a menu of communication tools for REDD+ awareness-raising activities

ILO Exchange Series

RIGHTS AND RESOURCES, CULTURE AND COMMERCE

2011 ended with a flurry of activities as several cross-cultural learning visits were coordinated with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This exposure program was organized to better strengthen the regional capacity of partners to support indigenous peoples, in particular relating to the promotion of ILO Convention 169, a legally binding international instrument which deals with the rights of indigenous peoples. The series of events revolved around the themes of sustainable forest management; forest and land rights advocacy; NTFP enterprise development; and food, health, and cultural security.

Through such initiative, the prospects for replication and strategy formulation across Asia are better assessed and validated with the participating Asian countries, as the participants saw actual practices on the ground. There is also a clearer understanding of the importance of international instruments in advocacy campaigns. The exchanges drew inspiration from the participants as well as from the communities they visited. They learned new technologies on NTFP enterprises and forest management, and various strategies on lobbying and bringing back the youth to indigenous culture. More importantly, cultural pride and sense of land ownership was boosted as the participants became testament to the celebration of IP traditions and successes.

donor roll

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is responsible for overseeing international labour standards. Founded in 1919, it became a specialized agency of the United Nations and its only tripartite agency with government, employer, and worker representatives. ILO brings these sectors together to shape policies and programmes promoting Decent Work for all. This arrangement makes the ILO a unique forum in which the governments and the social partners of the economy of its 183 members states can freely and openly debate and elaborate labour standards and policies.

OUR FOREST IS OUR CULTURE

Written by: ***Dominic Langat***
Photographs by: ***Earl Diaz***

It was at 6.00 am on 28th November 2011 when I woke up and the whole village of Long Nen was all covered with the morning mist and the sound of rain dropped on the zinc roof. It marks a memorable day for the Apoh Tutoh Penan Youth Association, as that will be first time they will be hosting the Penan Cultural Festival since it was formed in middle of 2011. This year's Penan festival was also special as we were joined by NTFP partners from Cambodia and Philippines. Everyone was just excited to witness the demonstration of the Penan Culture by tribal leaders and elders.

We could hardly get out of the house because of the rain. But the heavy downpour was not a hindrance for everyone because festive stick decorations were all over the place while the sound of the log drum, which is the Penan's ritual in welcoming visitors, could be heard from a distance. When the rain receded after some time, I could see the Youth holding and carrying sticks towards the headman's house with their parang tied to their thigh.

I saw a big crowd gather in front of the headman's house as Mr Wisli Alah, the Penan youth Association's Chairman urged the elders to show the traditional ways of the Penan. The purpose of the festival is to revive the Penan culture that seems to be forgotten by the younger generation In this fast changing world. Vanny Tuon of the Bunongs and Ricardo Turgo of the Pollilo Island Agta Dumagat shared their gratitude for the warm welcome to the festival.

After that short speech, the crowd went on to witness how the Penan in the olden days process the sago to get the starch for food. The youth listened attentively as TK Ting of Long Kawa explained the necessary ritual of lighting the fire to appease the spirit before they could proceed to acquiring starch from the tree by cutting it.

The forest became a venue for a sharing session as Jon Sam of the Bunongs whose specialty is on medicinal plants shared sentiments with the whole community on how dependent they are on medicinal plants for their daily life – for illnesses, giving birth, first aid and even cooking.

"Even if it is raining, not everything in the forest is wet". Continuous rains did not stop Mr. Puak Moyong, leader of one of the last nomadic Penans from demonstrating how to light a fire by striking a piece of metal and special stone.

With a good blowpipe and poison dart one can easily have a good hunting trip. According to Mr. Selapan Malin, a penan boy started to use a blowpipe when he is about seven to eight years old and used it to compete to shoot with their blowpipe. The participants had a chance to try using the blowpipe to hit a target. Since it was new to them, the Cambodians and Filipino visitors had a really good time playing with the blowpipe.

The evening program was full of artistic presentations using musical instruments such as the "Sape" and church choir hymns by the women's group from Long Nen . Laughter filled the room when the women performed their traditional dance of playful seduction, "Ngitiu"and the audience was more motivated and alive when Jon from Cambodia joint in the long dance and sing his own traditional songs.

Ending the festival with on a high note, the participants and visitors bade each other goodbye.

SUSTAINABLE INDIGENOUS FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE TIMES OF CHANGE

Written by: ***Irawan Sihombing***
Photographs by: ***Tanya Conlu***

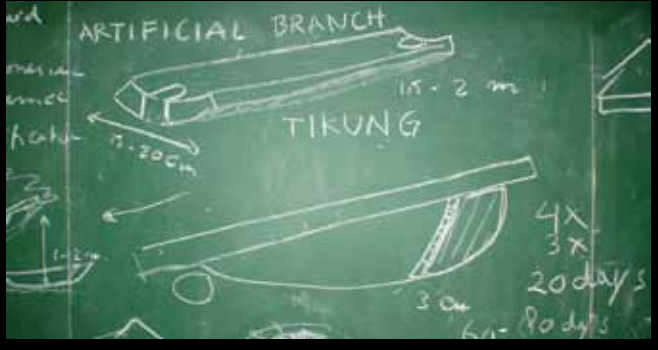
Through the support of Johnny Utama and NTFP-EP, I, along with Dominic Langat Sigau (Malaysia), Ernesto Conchada (Philippines), Jose Buendicho (Philippines), Roberto Musa (Philippines) and Alejandro Sambutan (Philippines) had the opportunity to visit Imugan in Nueva Vizcaya, which is home to the indigenous people, Ikalahan, last December 3 – 9, 2011.

It is interesting that IP rights are protected in the Philippines under the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). Through the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT), the IPs are given the chance to live on their own way of life according to their ancestral wisdom.

Their naturally improvised take on managing their forest has been proven to be effective. Forest Improvement Technology (FIT) has been a common Ikalahan practice. FIT is taking the timber they need sustainably and letting their agroforest land to be enriched by nature. It is the rationale behind their natural ways of living (non-use of agrochemicals), utmost respect for resources and their participatory involvement in managing the forests. To fertilize the land, they use almos, a Nepali plant species that cointains Nitrogen Fixing bacteria in their roots and the neutralization of soil by putting burnt wood ashes to release phosophorous bonded by aluminum in its acid form are just some of the techniques that they use.

While they have already developed a business unit to produce and sell juice, jams and jellies from forest fruits to finance their monetary needs, Imugan also serves as an area for agroforestry and ecotourism. Their rich culture, history and environment (including a waterfall which with the potentials of a microhydro power plant) is a sure hit to visitors who wish to learn about the Ikalahans.

The visit to Imugan has higlighted two important things: the crucial roles of IP leaders and the good practices that are developed by IPs. First, because these leaders have a strong bargaining position that encourage advocacy of IP rights and protection, seeing how Delbert Rice has led the Ikalahans is a living dream I see for IP leaders in Sarawak and Indonesia. Second, due to the lack of IP rights protection, good IP practices affect only the surface of economic and ecological development.



NEGRITOS JOINING THE CELEBRATION OF NATRIPAL'S NEW HERITAGE CENTRE

Written and Photographs by:
Jenne de Beer

The pre-festival activity was inspiring for the indigenous participants, particularly from the new partner MAHIFO in Malay, Aklan. The representatives from the different tribal communities participated in the opening celebrations of NATRIPAL's Heritage Center. The Heritage Center made of bamboo proudly displays the rich cultural heritage of the Tagbanua, Batak and Pal'awan tribes. The group easily mingled with the Palawan IP leaders present. During the solidarity evening, they shared dances and songs with a large group of IPs from Cambodia and Malaysia.

The participants visited and learned from the honey processing unit and the crafts shop, Arandeman, of NATRIPAL. They also had a meeting with National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) Commissioner Dionesia Banua, a former NATRIPAL director, on issues affecting Eatas in Panay particularly Boracay. They invited her to their festival and development forum in February 2012.

The participants had extensive sharings with Batak Chieftain Danilo, his family, and others from Roxas, Palawan. They related that there is, in most years, forest honey a plenty, which is largely sold through NATRIPAL's honey unit. A hunting ban for outsiders is being enforced at the barangay level and with the Batak's own careful management of hunting (including the avoidance of hunting wild boar which are gestating, or with young), wildlife is thriving.

Issues that were discussed include: Even with their Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) for 10,000 hectares, they still encounter problems with encroachments; Almaciga resin is a sad story, as a full 21 (!) years after the introduction of 'negotiated bidding' as an instrument to ensure IP access , DENR has still not processed permits for Batak resin tapping.

Finally, different techniques of fire making, burial practices and other cultural aspects were shared (turned out that much of it is more or less the same in the different areas) and a Batak delegation was officially invited for the February event in Malay. Chieftain Danilo, although somewhat concerned on how to travel there, happily accepted the invitation.

The participants were also able to visit a mangrove forest in Puerto Princesa before taking their flights to return to their respective provinces.

Oh My Goodness!

Sea food: Me?

"People ought to realize that when they go into the wilderness, they risk becoming part of the food chain."

Conservation biologist Rachel Graham on what to think of possible shark attacks. (In: IHT, March 28, 2012.)

JdB

LANDS AND FOREST RESOURCE RIGHTS ADVOCACY

Written and Photorgaphs by: ***Femy Pinto, Phan Channa, Matek Geram and Ken Piseth***

Last December 4, 2011, seveteen participants from Malaysia and Cambodia participated in the Learning Visit on Land Rights and Forest Resource Rights Advocacy in the Philippines. The exchange visit consisted of four important main points: raising awareness on the advocacy strategy for IP rights and forest issues; deepening their knowledge on CSO empowerment and mobilization towards IP rights and forestry rights advocacies; showing the different ways of ensuring tenurial recognition for social forestry and IP land and; to improve the networking among Indigenous Peoples NGOs Network in the region to extend the advocacy initiative to the international level.

Manila became the kick-off point for the exchange visit as NTFP-EP and NTFP-TF staff oriented the participants the overview of the NTFP regional network. Ruth Canlas, NTFP-TF Coordinator presented the the themes that NTFP-TF works with: network development, policy advocacy, resource management and enterprise development. Giovanni Reyes, Secretary General of KASAPI gave a situationer of the IPs in the Philippines, the IPRA law, and the different issues in tenure and land use. He shared that while IPRA provides for formal recognition of ancestral domains, cultural integrity, justice and human rights, and self governance, its translation to practice is something that has to be worked on. Olive Melendrez gave a short background on the situation of the Philippine forests, including biodiversity, decline of forest cover, the CBFM story and a short introduction to REDD+.

The second part of the visit was held in Palawan, Philippines where the participants were introduced to various NGOs working on national and provincial issues towards social justice in the light of climate, resource and indigenous rights. The effects of mining on communities and the benefits of REDD were the main issues tackled in their trip.

The participants had the chance to visit government offices on their trip back to Manila. Questions on IP struggles and how they can be localized to their respective countries were answered by National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) Chairperson, Brigida Pawid. Their next stop was at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) where they met the Chief of the Indigenous Community Affairs Division, Joey Austria who conducted an informal discussion on various forestry issues such as tenurial security and the encroachment of different mining tenements that transpired in the Philippines.

Doming Nayahangan of ILO Philippines gave a short introduction to ILO 169, which was adopted by 157 countries. He said that those countries who ratified the convention is bound to implement its provisions, otherwise ILO can impose a sanction. In the Philippines, this is embodied in the IPRA Law. He said it will be a long process for countries to adopt ILO 169 fully; as for example, the IPRA took 20 years to pass. He then shared the salient points of ILO 169 which includes community driven participatory development approach, multi-sectoral convergence, and scale up IP livelihood from subsistence to income and employment.

Before going back home, the participants understood the essential role of the government in ensuring the implementation of good laws such as IPRA .

Dimgo ke Eata Ribo

(DREAM OF ALL EATA)

FESTIVAL & DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Written by: ***Jenne de Beer***
Photographs by: ***Beng Camba, Ramil Perez, Portia Villarante*** *and* ***Yasmin Arquiza***

The 3rd in a series of Negrito cultural revival festivals took place last February in Malay on the island of Panay, with participants (mostly) from the Visayas, an archipelago in the Central Philippines, as well as from Palawan.

Festival Day 1 began with a Grand Parade through the streets of Malay town.

Stories, Music and Dance: Enjoy!

Basket dance: solo una! (Left), Enacting fire dance by the Ati of Boracay (Middle), The bamboo percussionists (almost) never let the beat off. (Right)

Games, Games, Games!

Javelin throwing: so-ooo far! (Left), Stilt racing: so-ooo fast! (Right)

MAHIFO

The event was hosted by Eata Peoples Organization, MAHIFO. A lot of work, but a great success! Support, moral or otherwise, came, among others, from NTFP-TF, Both ENDS, Municipality of Malay, NCIP, NCCA and AnthroWatch.

A Development Forum kicked off on Day 2, with Eata/Ati leaders in charge and top officials involved. Not surprisingly, much of the discussions revolved around ancestral domain issues, as, for historical reasons, titling of IP land is lagging far behind in the Visayan region. Meanwhile, highlights were: Inspirational talk of, and Q&A session with, DENR Chief of Indigenous Affairs, Joey Austria, (a regular at the festivals) and idem with, as always razorblade sharp, NCIP Commissioner Dionesia Banua. Finally (on photo) Joycie Dorado-Alegre, the dynamic head of the NCCA[1] sub-commission on cultural minorities and the arts, reflected on what had passed on during the 2 days. Which she did, as expected, with much panache.

Gourmet Food: Taste it!

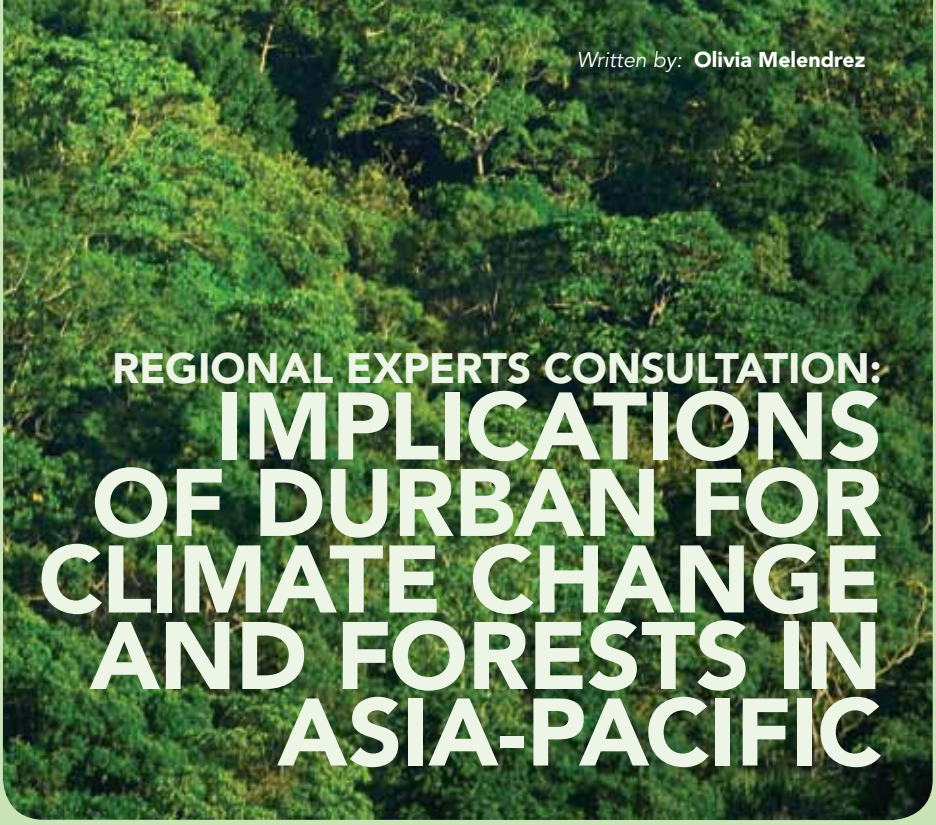
One of the most coveted treats – apart from a free flow of forest honey: 'binitin'.

The dish, composed of palm heart, aquatic snails and fermented fish, has to simmer for quite a while before it is done. (Left), Mother and son team unpacking the 'ready to eat' delicacy (Right)

The morning of Day 3 was spent on an exchange visit to the little island of Boracay, just off shore from the festival venue. The place is now an over-popular tourist hotspot and the Ati, original inhabitants of the island, have been pushed into a corner. Although they have recently been awarded AD title, the land remains occupied by others.

Ati teenagers showing the way to their ancestral domain. (Top), Ocular inspection of the two hectare Ati domain: it is not much and it looks even less… (Bottom)

1: Philippines National Commission for Culture and the Arts.



Written by: **Olivia Melendrez**

REGIONAL EXPERTS CONSULTATION:

IMPLICATIONS OF DURBAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTS IN ASIA-PACIFIC

The 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held in Durban, South Africa from November 28 to December 09, 2011. Expected outcomes for REDD-plus in this conference include progress in the areas of finance, safeguards, measuring, reporting and verifying (MRV).

A consortium of partners from the Asia Pacific region composed of The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and CoDe REDD-Philippines saw the need to assess these outcomes in view of looking at impacts into Asia-Pacific forests and forestry. Thus, the said group organized an activity entitled "Regional Experts Consultation: Implications of Durban for Climate Change and Forests in Asia-Pacific" on February 21, 2012 in Quezon City, Philippines. The activity was made possible with support from the REDD-Net, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), ASEAN Social Forestry Network (ASFN), German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The objectives of the consultation were to: Discuss and answer questions that forest and forestry related stakeholders are asking following the COP 17 negotiations in Durban 2011; Tackle some of the key issues that forestry institutions and other relevant stakeholders will face when formulating climate change policies and strategies; and, Disseminate timely information on implications of COP17 for local communities and the forestry sector in the region. Participants were thirteen (13) specialists from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines who are familiar with the outcomes of the COP17 negotiations and local stakeholders to observe the experts meeting.

Among the the highlights of discussions are the following: During the open forum, observers from the Philippines including from the Indigenous Peoples and local communities provided insights and recommendations notably on the popularization of REDD-plus using local language and the hope that REDD-plus be a vehicle to re-unite, and institutionalize national governance to the Indigenous Peoples' territory.

COP17/CMP7
UNITED NATIONS
CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2011
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Historical responsibilities and commitments at Kyoto Protocol were not met, hence, Annex 1 countries should step up;
- An international agreement will not be reached soon thus, Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) should be pursued particularly at the grassroots level or as a sectoral agreement;
- Consideration of alternative financing options for REDDplus due to varying statuses of countries vis-a-vis the compliance market;
- Equitable benefit sharing should encompass commercial valuation of carbon, and address the needs of forest dependent people in terms of social services and protectionx of sustainable livelihoods;
- The need to develop and align Forestry Voluntary Carbon Market (VCM) standards, methods and benefits in the context of REDD-plus and the involvement of governments in defining VCM status.;
- Asia-Pacific countries could take a step-wise approach and learn from experiences in order to gain confidence in implementing and mainstreaming activities;
- MRV systems should be localized with active community participation to take on a holistic approach, and to integrate safeguards into the aspects of MRV and emission level accounting;

Written by: **Joy Torres**

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND THE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SECTOR IN THE ASEAN REGION: A BROWN BAG SESSION

The ASEAN CSO 101 Brown Bag session was an idea envisioned by CSOs in the agriculture and of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Division in the ASEAN secretariat. This event emerged as a follow up activity after the presentation of NTFP-EP at the Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers in Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF) in Jakarta in October 2011.

The ASEAN Brown Bag Session was organized to provide a clearer picture of the CSO sector and the various perspectives, approaches they utilize in the forestry and agriculture sectors, to highlight positive examples of CSO – government /intergovernmental collaborations, and to explore key themes and points for ASEAN-CSO engagement in forestry and agriculture.

The event was held at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta on February 16, 2012 and was participated in by ASEAN representatives, the diplomatic community, the media, CSO representatives in Southeast Asia, and the ASEAN Secretariat. The ASEAN CSO 101 Brown Bag is implemented through the ASEAN-SDC Social Forestry and Climate Change project (ASFCC). The event is a joint activity of NTFP-EP, ASIADHRRA, the ASFN Secretariat and the Agriculture and Natural Resources Division of the ASEAN secretariat.

The first session consisted of a series of keynote addresses from Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, ASEAN Secretary General , H.E. Heinz Walker-Nederkoorn, Swiss Ambassador to ASEAN, and Dr. Harry Santoso, Director General of Watershed Management and Social Forestry Development, Indonesia. This was followed by statements from CSOs particularly from Ms. Cristina Guerrero, Executive Director of NTFP-EP and Mr. Muhammad Nurudin, chairperson of the Alyansa Petani Indonesia (API)/ Asian Farmers' Association (AFA) underscoring expanding opportunities for cooperation with CSOs to further enhance and sustain meaningful mechanisms of dialogue with ASEAN.

This session was followed by a video presentation entitled "CSO What?", a short clip depicting public views of civil society role in public policy and in community life. The film also highlighted positive examples of CSO engagement and 'why they work'. The video closed with messages on prospects for CSO engagement with the ASEAN.

The brown bag session ended with a Panel discussion and Open forum focused on identifying critical factors, lessons and recommendations in creating meaningful engagements between the CSOs and the ASEAN and its member states. The panelists consisted of Dr. Ujjwal Pradhan of ICRAF, Ms. Vicky Tauli Corpuz of Tebtebba Foundation and former head of UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Initiatives (UNPFII), Mr. Suriyan Vichitlekarn, Assistant Director and Head, Agriculture and Natural Resources Division, ASEAN secretariat, Ms. Lany Rebagay of the Association of Farmers in Asia and Dr. Iman Santoso, Director General for Forest Utilization, and Dr. Tahlim Sudaryanto, Assistant Minister for International Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture of Indonesia. Dr. Doris Capistrano, adviser to the ASEAN-SDC Social Forestry and Climate Change project, was moderator of the Panel discussion and Open forum.

CRITICAL FACTORS AND LESSONS FOR CSOS AND ASEAN MEMBER STATE ENGAGEMENT:

- Mutual trust, respect and willingness to engage and collaborate between CSOs and governments
- Openness in working together towards common objectives and in sharing respective agendas
- Recognition for the 'space' for CSO engagement in the agriculture and forestry sector underscored in the ASEAN charter
- Learning and understanding institutions, process and rules of engagement of each party

RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE CSO-ASEAN MEMBER STATES ENGAGEMENT:

- The framework and mechanism for CSO engagement in the agriculture and forestry sector in the ASEAN has to be mapped out and clearly outlined so as to define the process, rules of engagement, and actors.
- Opportunities should be created to demystify stereotypes from both sides. Break stereotypes through confidence building activities.
- Legitimize engagement by building institutional structures that facilitate discussion of issues.
- Resources need to be mobilized for CSOs to participate consistently in ASEAN and member state processes. Such resources can translate relevant information that will be carried out into actions.
- Create and sustain avenues for learning and to support processes for clear information relay.

NTFP kudos!

Datu Mantangkilan Cumatang, more commonly known as Amay, is the forest grown leader of the Higaonon tribe in Bukidnon. He has fought for the recognition and respect for their ancestral domain and sacred forest lands against external threats such as encroachments and blind development projects. His efforts have led the Higaonon community towards securing land tenure through peace, and integrity to their culture. Amay became the recipient of the Darrell Posey Field Fellowship Award for Ethnoecology and Traditional Resource Rights.

Arjun Singh Nag, known as Nagji, is one of the first tribal lawyers of Bastar district in Central India. As an advocate of conservation and protection of sacred groves and restoration of degraded forests, he was awarded with the Paul K. Fereyabend Foundation Grant. Working with his colleagues at Legal and Environment Action Forum (LEAF), he has contributed greatly to the least favored communities in India and engaged them in a process of solidarity to improve their living conditions and promote environmental awareness and advocate just land rights.

The **Center for Biodiversity and Development (CBD)** received the Vietnam Environmental Awards (VNEA) in 2011. VNEA is awarded to organizations, individuals and communities with outstanding achievements in the cause of environmental protection in Vietnam, thus, recognizing CBD's involvement in conservation of biodiversity, promotion of sustainable natural resource use, empowerment at the grassroots levels and adherence to cultural charateristics and indigenous knowledge of communities.

Fr. Edwin "Edu" Gariguez, a Filipino Catholic priest, received the Goldman Environmental Prize for his fearless efforts against mining in Mindoro. Working with Mangyan Mission, a NTFP-TF partner NGO, and organizing Alamin (Alliance Against Mining), a coalition of civil society groups, church leaders and indigenous peoples, has strengthened his efforts towards the protection of the rich Mindoro biodiversity and indigenous peoples rights to oppose the long-running nickel mining on the island.

How can we have a story that links the tiger with a broom? Strange partners! However, this is the story of Sathyamangalam Wildlife Sanctuary where both exist together.

Sathyamangalam Wildlife Sanctuary (SWS) is a protected area in South India, declared in 2008, and enlarged in 2011, which covers forest area of 1,411.6 km2 (545.0 sq mi). SWS is notable as the largest wildlife sanctuary in Tamil Nadu.

The ecological and economic significance of this sanctuary could not be undermined: it serves as a wildife corridor in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve between four protected areas in the Western and Eastern Ghats. It adjoins and supports the agricultural, forest and profit generating livelihood of 19 Irula, Urali and Sholiga adivasi dominated communities

Keystone has been involved in this area since 2006 and has worked with the Forest Department in the Joint Forest Management Program of 27 villages on collecting and selling of NTFPs. This healthy partnership between various stakeholders has generated much benefit towards eco-development, livelihood sustenance and forest protection.

As part of the research we have also done regeneration studies of several NTFPs including the Eecham (Phoenix spp.). The leaves of this plant are collected for making brooms and auctioned through the Village Forest Committee system. Over the past years 2008 to 2010, the VFCs have together collected 325-400 quintals (100 kg) of Eecham leaves of a value ranging between Rs. 46-48 lakhs. However, there are current orders to remove cattle from the villages and not to keep any livestock either.

This change is due to the fact that the wildlife sanctuary is now a proposed tiger reserve. In December 2011, the Conservator of Forests, Erode Circle stated that the SWS is home to at least 28 tigers which has been confirmed by a camera trapping study conducted by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). As can be seen, the tiger population has grown in the 3 years from counting 9 Bengal Tigers in 2009. Something to note here is that tiger populations have more than doubled in the same area where extensive NTFPs have been collected. Very simplistically, it looks like a case of co-existence for the tiger and the broom, even though inviolate areas are recommended for the tiger's survival.

The use of community based approaches in development is slowly gaining momentum locally and internationally. In an Indian context, eco-development as a strategy recognises traditional dependencies of people on forests for domestic use as well as supplementing livelihoods. It seeks to rationalise the demands of communities by promoting efficient use of resources and alternative livelihoods. In essence, eco-development aims to strengthen nature conservation through participatory processes that empower local people to take responsibility for their socio-economic well-being in ways that do not reduce the biodiversity capital maintained within PAs (Sharma et al. 2004). This definition sums up the efforts that should be made if a transition has to be made from a reserved forest to a protected area, without the people feeling alienated or being commanded by the authorities.

Currently the processes are on to increase the buffer zone and under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 the rights still have to be settled. The Wildlife Protection Act 1972 has also been amended in 2006 to include the protocol and guidelines of relocation of villages from critical tiger areas. Such clarificatory steps are essential to veer away from usual cases of such reserves in the country, where relocated people have been rendered rootless, de-cultured and dependent on an alien un-forested world.

The situation creates a conducive platform of opportunity and challenge to synergize sustainable livelihoods and nature conservation. It may be useful to train `barefoot ecologists' who can monitor the forests and wildlife and participate in this conservation effort or have communities strictly follow principles related to sustainable harvests.

The community is looking for participation, information sharing and dialogue, recognition of their traditional role in the forests, their ancestral domains, sacred groves and customary laws. Can we `be easy' with our concepts of management, governance and research to partner with adivasi people as the `nayakans' of the forest? There are so many ways in which the state and private players have successfully managed alienating indigenous people from their lands – mining, dams and commercial plantations being some examples. Let not conservation be an added reason, which should actually look at adivasi people as part of the scenario, in the true spirit of human ecology.

First Asian Ikat Weavers Conference

an experience by
Suzy Imbah anak Merudin

in Interview by: **Diweng Bakir**
Photographs by: **Manny Uy and Erwin Diloy**

Suzy is an Iban pua kumbu weaver from Nanga Entawau, Kapit, Sarawak, Malaysia and she has been weaving pua since the age of 12. She was one of the participants of the First Asian Ikat Weavers conference held at Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, The Philippines from 17 to 19 April 2012. She is currently managing a small enterprise, which employs five weavers to produce pua kumbu and other handicraft made from pua. vvw

Ikat, which means "tied" or "bound" in the Malay language, is a style of weaving that uses a tie-dye process on either the warp or weft before the threads are woven to create a pattern or design.

Ikat weaving designs often have symbolic meanings. It usually takes a long process and is truly a testament of the creativity and artistry of indigenous women.

The First Asian Ikat Weavers Conference was a moment for Asian weavers to come together to reaffirm their pride as bearers of cultural heritage. The conference was hosted by the Lake Sebu Indigenous Women Weavers Association (LASIWWAI) in partnership with NTFP-EP. Community presentations were also supported by presentations from the National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA), the Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI) and the Intellectual Property Right Office (IPO). Over 70 participants from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Cambodia were in attendance.

It took me three days to get there. Express boat, four flights on three different carriers, taxis, vans and buses I have to take to meet my peers, my fellow ikat weavers. I guess that we all live in remote areas, where the rivers still run in the forest, where the land still provide us with the materials we need to continue weaving the ikat.

The three day conference was my first experience at a regional level. I have never imagined and realised that there are numerous ikat with different names, some of which has escaped my mind now. Different might it be called, the cultural and social importance is as much the same as the pua kumbu of the Iban people, to which I belong.

Many of the papers presented are important. Comprehending so much information in such a short time really overwhelms me. The technical terms, marketing concepts and the intellectual property rights topics are interesting but I did not manage to grasp the whole concept due to the time constraint and also my poor command of English and Bahasa. Translating the terms to my native language is also hard.

The sharing by the various communities and groups were very impressive and I grasp most of the important points; organising, working together, the cultural and social importance of ikat to various people and community, the relationship between weaving and society, the explicit and implicit meaning on land to the Indigenous Communities, the need to preserve and spread the culture and knowledge to the younger and most of all, the different kind of natural materials as a source of natural dye.

The natural dyes paper presented really impressed me. While terms like tarum and mengkudu are familiar to me, there are other terms and names which I am not familiar with and the range of colours derived from the various raw materials. The plant which was use by the T'boli people to produce black dye is something new and I am not sure if it is available in our forest. The research and development by The Philippine government on natural dye is very inspiring. It is one of the items in my wish list.

Other things in my wish list include a network for ikat weavers in the region so we can share knowledge, technologies, expertise and resources. It would bring more meaning to our endeavour to preserve and teach the intricate and important cultural art to our community and societies to not only enhance women empowerment but also to strengthen the social fabrics of our community.

CERTIFYING SUSTAINABILITY:

SPOTLIGHT ON Rattan Resources in Indonesia

Written by: **Katherine Mana-Galido**
Photograph by: **Mathew John**

Rattan is an important industry in Indonesia. A presentation during the workshop on Rattan Eco-Certification held in Bogor, Indonesia last March 6-7, 2012 shared the importance of rattan as a livelihood option to more than five million people depending on the said industry. Compared to the sixty two species of rattan in the Philippines, Indonesia has over 350 species. Indonesia might have more rattan species, but as a Filipino, I was proud to learn that the Philippines is known to them as a land of great rattan designers. Participants from different stakeholders including farmers, traders and different ministry representatives attended the workshop.

As a participant from another country, I could feel that the newly passed Indonesian policy banning exportation of rattan raw materials and semi-finished rattan products was not warmly received. This is especially true, considering that until last year, the export figures on raw and semi-finished products reached a whopping 25-30 million tonnes!

It was discussed during the workshop that rattan, being a champion product of Indonesia, should be managed through rules and regulations that promote sustainable management of the species. To look at sustainability and certification aspects, four presentations were shared.

The first presentation on certification was the experience of WWF-Laos as they have gone through the tedious process of certification using the standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Thibault Ledecq shared how they worked with government and local communities in piloting the FSC certification for rattan forest. Matthew John of Keystone Foundation, India shared about the Participatory Guarantee System or PGS. PGS is based on principles of trust and community empowerment and is different from the 3rd party verification system of FSC. Representative of Organic Alliance Indonesia or AOI shared PGS efforts in Indonesia.

I also shared and related how Participatory Resource Monitoring or PRM criteria and indicators for NTFPs can help in developing standards for rattan certification. The PRM system is being lobbied by the NTFP Task Force in the Philippines as a method that will ensure sustainability of rattan and provide an alternative to the costly and lengthy process of a rattan Inventory system. Presently, the conduct of rattan inventory is being required by Philippine policy before a utilization permit will be given to communities. Coming from the Philippine experience, it will be good to look at the cost, simplicity and input to sustainable management in developing methods and standards that will certify eco-sustainable products.

To discuss more on various issues of rattan, participants were divided based on three topics: the market for eco-certified rattan products and policy concerns, farmers and rattan forest management, and certification. A lot of the participants agreed that there was a need for eco-certification. Many looked at PGS as the more practical and simple way for local communities to become certified while ensuring quality and sustainable products.

At the end of the workshop, a new movement was formed called Sustainable Rattan Indonesia or Rotan Lestari Indonesia. Priority activities were identified and different organizations were tasked to take them on with NTFP-EP as the secretariat. It made me wish that the same movement on rattan sustainability could be formed in the Philippines considering the threats to the remaining forest ecosystems resulting in the decline of abundance of rattan and other NTFPs.

Food from the Forest

FOREST CUISINES FROM Mondulkiri

Written by: **Nicolas Savajol, Nomad RSI**
Photographs by: **Nicolas Savajol and Leonard Reyes**

The Mondulkiri Resource and Documentation Centre (MRDC) is a project of Nomad RSI that aims to gather knowledge and documents regarding Mondulkiri province and Bunong culture, especially related to their knowledge of the environment. Together with WWF and NTFP-EP an initiative on Food from the Forest has been launched in order to collect Bunong community knowledge of wild food and to build up a community project to value Bunong practices through their culinary arts. Several field trips have been conducted by Nomad RSI accompanied by the MRDC volunteers (group of young Bunong active in the MRDC). First field activities focused on collecting plant specimen to prepare herbarium vouchers and to be able to identify plant species. 28 plant specimens were collected: bamboos, lianas, rattans, palms, ferns, gingers, tree leaves and roots, showing the large diversity of plants used by Bunong people in their everyday life. In a second step, key persons in the community, mainly in Dak dam community, were interviewed to collect their food recipes (those were usually old women who were interviewed while they were preparing the meals, that was then shared altogether and highly appreciated by all).

Bunong culinary art is based on an extensive use of wild plants of different types. It can be roughly categorized into four broad groups of dishes; *Trav Proung (Slor Prong), Trav Chou (Slor Bok), Trav Paey (Slor Massaeu), Trav Gom Harr (Slor pahaeu),* with many different types of recipes and plants used depending on the individual families, the village environment, time of the year and circumstances of the meal.

Trav Proung, meaning the plunging dish, is a common dish for the Bunong and cooked inside a bamboo stick. Vegetables, spices, meat or fish are cut in small pieces and slowly cooked in the bamboo with water. When the food is cooked a rattan stick is used to pound the meal to make a sort of mash. The stick is diving into the food which gives the name. *Trav Proung* can be a very simple dish that people make with only few ingredients when spending nights in the forest. As it does not require to carry any kitchenware, everything is taken from the forest. It can also be made into a complex aromatic dish including a large variety of vegetables, spices and meat/fish (as described in the recipe below).

Trav Chou, which means the pounded dish, is based on a vegetable mash that can be enriched with meat or fish. Vegetables are cooked in a pot and once ready, all ingredients are mashed together. Such as *Trav Proung,Trav Chou* can be made of just a few ingredients for a simple meal but can also be developed into a delicious mash with forest vegetables, round aubergines and rattan. When rattans are used the dish sets a bitter taste that the cook will adjust depending on the taste of the family.

Trav Paey, which means the paste dish, is an important Bunong dish that is very much appreciated. The base of this dish is a floury paste made from pounded rice enriched with chillies, lemongrass and other spices depending on individual taste. The leaves from Ragnaow are always included when available as they are considered a flavour enhancer equivalent to MSG. *Trav Paey* can get very different tastes and consistence depending on the spices used in the paste and types of vegetables, meat or fish cooked in it. The recipe below details a tasty kind of *Trav Paey* made with the leaves of the tree called *Payap.*

Trav Gom Harr means simple dish and is the basic food eaten on ordinary days. It's a vegetable soup cooked with various ingredients mainly depending on individual preference and ingredients available. Therefore this type of dish can take a large variety of tastes and flavours.

Trav Watt

Trav Watt is a traditional Bunong dish, very similar to *Trav Paey,* which is based on a paste made from pounded rice and the leaves of *Payap* and *Ragnaow. Trav watt* is very much appreciated as the pounded leaves of *Payap* give the food a really nice creamy texture whereas leaves of *Ragnaow* enhance the flavours. Bunong people usually cook this dish for the family only but not as often as they would like, as the leaves of *Payap* are now quite rare in Mondulkiri province. In Dak dam commune people need to go to collect them in rivers close to Vietnam border at an entire day's walking distance.

Paste Ingreadients:
Lemon grass, Chili, Jam pray Leaves (Katiem Leaves) Jamtap (Katiem Krap) tubers or rhizome, Payap and Ragnaow's Leaves

Extras:
Dried or grilled meat, Pork with a little fat, *Pus prit* (ash of banana instead of salt), Soup powder and salt, Na'om (Prahouk meat or Bunong meat-paste), Wild pig or deer's fat

Procedure
- Soak the rice in water for 30 minutes to an hour.
- Pound the rice with *Payap* and *Ragnaow* leaves until it turns into a greenish paste.
- Pour water into a pot and mix with the paste until it is consistent.
- Put all the ingredients into a pot.
- Pour lukewarm or fresh water into the paste and stir it until blended well to obtain a creamy texture.
- Pour it into the pot with the other ingredients.
- Boil until all ingredients are cooked.
- Take it from the pot and serve on a dish with rice.

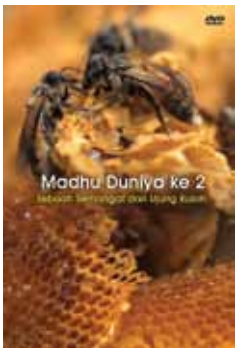
Trav Proung

Trav Proung is a popular food with Bunong people who cook it on a daily basis, for the family and for various kinds of ceremonies, such as after harvesting rice. This dish is cooked by using a bamboo tube. Before cooking, all the vegetables and meats need to be cut in to small pieces to fit in the bamboo. Once ready all ingredients are cooked together in the bamboo tube on a fire. This dish does not use any kitchenware to be prepared, all materials are taken directly from the forest. The sources of the vegetables used are from mountains, valleys, streams, and rivers sometimes far from the villages.

Paste Ingreadients:
Jampray (Katiem leaves), Jamtap (Katiem tubers or rhizome), Pumpkin, Rattan (inner part of the stem at the end of plant), Small (somewhat bitter) or wild eggplants , Leaves of *ratogn* ferns, Chili, *ratork* and *rachorl,* Fish, frog, squirrel or other meat, Soup powder (seasoning) and salt, *Term Chok* (inner part of this wild palm tree)

Procedure
- Cut the bamboo and break all sections to get a tube
- Put the vegetables, meats and fish together inside the bamboo tube
- Pour a little water (around 5% of the bamboo tube size)
- Put the bamboo tube on fire until the vegetables are cooked
- Add the soup powder (seasoning) and salt
- Pound with a stick made from rattan until it turns into a mash
- Pour into a dish and serve hot with rice.

Publications and Videos



Madhu Duniya ke 2 Sebuah Semangat dari Ujung Kulon

Proceeding from the first conference held in India in 2007, Madhu Duniya II was held in Ujong Kulon National Park, Pecuang Island, Banten, Indonesia from 21 – 25 September 2011.Madhu Duniya is the largest gathering of forest honey collectors and experts in Asia.

The conference was attended by over 70 participants from various countries: India, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia with this year's theme on the health benefits of forest honey.

Madhu Duniya is a Sanskrit phrase which means Honey World - to emphasize that the conference empowers forest honey, forest honey farmers, and communities whose lives depend on the forest.

CSO What?

Creating a space for healthy dialogue between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and ASEAN member states in the field of agriculture and forestry was one of the aims of the session entitled "Civil Society Organizations and the Agriculture and Forestry Sector in the ASEAN Region: A Brown Bag Session". The event took place last February 16, 2012 in Jakarta as a follow up activity to the NTFP-EP presentation at the Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers in Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF) in Jakarta in October 2011

The video highlights perspectives from various sectors: people on the street, NGOs, peoples organizations, forest department representatives, ministers, and academicians. It seeks to open a discussion on CSO engagement with ASEAN in the field of forestry and agriculture and to bridge gaps and demystify stereotypes through confidence building activities like the ASEAN CSO 101.

Koleksi Motif Tikar Dayak Iban "The collection of the woven mat motifs of the Dayak Iban"

This new coffee table book is published by Yayasan Riak Bumi in Indonesia. It is the first book of its kind documenting over 100 woven mat motifs of the Dayak Iban of Borneo, specifically those of Kapuas Hulu in West Kalimantan. It is an effort to save the tradition of weaving bemban mats of the Dayak Iban women. Bemban is a water reed found in the wetlands of the Danau Sentarum National Park in West Kalimantan. Weaving bemban mats used to be associated with prestige and pride in the community, but many Dayak women are leaving their villages to work in the neighboring state of Sarawak or going into the cities to study. Fewer and fewer women know how to weave and the knowledge and skill to make varied intricate designs is disappearing. This book was made possible with support from NTFP-EP and Cordaid-Netherlands.

Agnes Ramos, joined the EP family as a book keeper last 2011. Her experience on NGO work is extensive as she has been working with various marginalized sectors for almost 2 decades now.

Her friends usually call her "Ms. Friendship" as Agnes is fond of meeting new people. She loves to travel, meet new people, learn and their culture and way of life.

Figure skater Natasya Muliandari has been with the NTFP-EP since December 2011 as the Assistant Program Officer for the newly established office in Indonesia. She completed her studies majoring in International Relations and Biology which compliment each other and perfectly support her interests. Pancakes, good coffee, and spending hours at the ice rink always work to boost her mood!

new staff

oh My goodness!

UCPB

S(ch)andals or Fun in the Philippines?

The United Coconut Planters bank was created a long time ago, presumably to address the perennial credit constrains of small coconut farmers. But now it is reported that the bank "does not anymore entertain persons wearing slippers and seeking a loan". Exactly the comfy and affordable foot wear, which most rural people make do with!
(PDI, March 28th, 2012.)

JdB