

Voices from the forest



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SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

on the logging road

A child draws a map of the territory of his people, the nomadic Penan living along the *tutoh* river. The site is bordering the Gunung Mulu National Park, one of Malaysia's top-notch conservation areas. However, logging company Samling has recently announced its plan to invade the last remaining patches of good forest in the national park's bufferzone. This is of grave concern to the Penan, as they depend on these patches for sago, their staple food.

{Story is included in our film, just released, **Voices From the Forest**; see Free Books and Videos, page 12}

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PHOTO: J. DE BEER

NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS EXCHANGE PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH & SOUTHEAST ASIA

impressions of marketing on-the-job

I went to Manila to attend an on-the-job marketing training for ten days. The objective of the training was to fulfill our learning needs in relation fair trade system, implementation of marketing mix in practices, and ways to increase marketing management. At this training, we saw marketing processes and practices of a marketing foundation.

The training is related very much to my own work. At the first meeting of the Forest Honey Network of Indonesia held in Danau Sentarum, there were activity compilers among the participants. There were five earlier analyses: to take inventory honey potentiality each sites, organising at honey farmer stage, relationship between beekeeping and sustainable nature management, post harvesting process and marketing process. At this time, honey from Danau Sentarum passed four of these five stages. The urgent need is marketing. Riak Bumi fills the marketing function at Pontianak city and had just sold only about 1.5 tonnes honey from a potential of 20-25 tonnes almost every harvesting time.

The place for training is the Upland Marketing Foundation Incorporation (UMFI), a non-government organisation concerned with marketing upland food products; lately they sold canned fish too. To them, NGOs cannot remain dependent on grants and therefore NGOs must have resources to raise funds so that people do not leave the community. UMFI works directly with and sells the products of farmer organisations and small enterprise groups. They implement transparent accounts with producers and support a fair trade system.

I saw the marketing line process of UMFI. We visited the supermarkets as UMFI's main target are customers of city supermarkets. UMFI care very much about quality, taste, but labelling and packaging are important things also. UMFI has many competitors with similar products and similiar packaging, but they promote their product as organic. Many in the urban population are searching for "healthy" products even if they are more expensive. UMFI put a logo on the caps of their bottles. This butterfly logo shows that the product is organic.

We also visited organic rice farming in Pecuarua, Bicol province and a women's group, a small enterprise that produces peanut jam in Naga province.

Modern Indigenous or Modi is part of the NTFP Task Force in the Philippines. They handle management and marketing of handicraft products woven from natural fibres. They built a modern concept around indigenous

products. Interestingly, MODI chose high class segmentation. Helped by volunteer designers they can help local community produce nice, artistic, unique but high value products. They can produce limited items without pressuring the local communities.

Their success was recognised when they won the Super Award 2005 as best modern indigenous product from a well-known national newspaper. (It was also my first time to drink western wine!)

I learned how important it is to educate customers about our products, besides ensuring the buyer or consignee that we have proper products to sell. Segmentation is also important because to whom we sell the product influences how we package,

promote and take the price to the customer. Moreover, as a marketing officer, it is important to stay focused on the marketing activity – we

need consistently to do it. Marketing is a process. Personally, Riak Bumi has its homework to do.

Fair trade should not only give a profit to the seller but community as producer also. Lastly, build a good relationship with your producers; an agreement among the producers to market their products through fair trade not only adds trust but also helps them to see challenges of their product so that it is easier to make changes if needed.

Seselia ..Nina.. Ernawati

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When I embarked on my first trip abroad to Manila, Philippines I was eager to know how things work in another country and how I can understand their place and context. To my surprise, I felt very much at home with the NTFP-EP team and my companion from Indonesia, Sesilia Ernawati aka Nina.

Our first visit to the UMFI office put things in their perspective and helped me understand their operations. Though I was a little surprised to see few numbers of NTFP-based products, I could understand the need for such a distribution network which facilitates the marketing of NTFP-based products. Holding an identity in such a crowded shelf space is a task in itself. "Healthy Rice" and muscovado sugar, which comprise more than one-third of UMFI's turnover, have a strong presence

J. DE BEER / INSET: RIAK BUMI - A PAGE FROM THE MANUAL



Nina (in a mesh hat) of Riak Bumi, undertook documentation of traditional honey harvesting and processing in Lake Danau Sentarum. Riak Bumi is currently making a honey manual (right).

ALOISA SANTOS / HONEY PHOTO: KEYSTONE



Sam shares the secret of wonderful chapatis to Filipino friends. Sam handles Keystone's Green Shoppe, which markets spiced honey and other NTFPS produced by Indian communities



across the malls and super stores. Innovative products based on NTFPs from the rural areas can easily find space in the urban markets through this distribution channel.

The small team – managing a turnover of more than Pesos 10 million – shows the level of efficiency and commitment.

The ability to stay at the top end of a competitive rice market infuses a lot of confidence for the team to launch new product lines and gain attention. Having a presence in such a big urban market is the strongest factor for growth for UMFI.

This visit has given me the confidence to work in an urban

market and look into a strategy for faster growth and networking.

An assured supply base for rice and sugar in Pecuaría has given UMFI the leverage needed for growth. But reservations like competition from certified organic rice and the ability of the Pecuaría cooperative to fulfill the demand created by growing market share of Healthy Rice still remain. The launch of mineral water may add to this rate of growth and open other sectors of the market in Manila.

The marketing of Modi was an entirely new experience after the UMFI experience. Modi's complete indigenous identity and exclusive NTFP-based products impressed me very much. The ability to join hands with top-of-the-line designers to create completely up-market product lines shows the depth of understanding of the market and the means of achieving the goals of sustainable use of NTFPs.

With the wealth of experience the NTFP-EP has in sustainable use of NTFPs, the goals of balanced growth and equitable distribution of benefits can without doubt be achieved in the near future.

I am grateful to the NTFP-EP and UMFI team for their hospitality and assistance which translated this visit into a memorable and valuable experience.

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While the NTFP-EP's work has always aimed to be holistic and integrative, this issue of *Voices* brings to the fore efforts in marketing. It is an area which needs much attention given the cut-throat competition and the wide array of products seeking markets. By knowing the rules of the game, NTFPs have made headway in both the fair trade and mainstream markets.

One activity aimed at sharing experiences in marketing was an exchange amongst partners in Indonesia, India and the Philippines. On-the-job, T. Samraj (Keystone, India) and Nina Ernawati (Riak Bumi, Indonesia) saw firsthand how the Upland Marketing Foundation goes about marketing various NTFP products in supermarkets in the big city. They also discovered how the CustomMade Crafts Center has been actively promoting its handicrafts through its brandnames CustomMade and Modi. Already, Sam and Nina see areas for integration of their learnings in their own work.

With the Philippine crafts center going full blast, it is now exploring how to break into the European market. Nola Andaya shares these opportunities for Philippines crafts based on her insights from her recent trip to France and the Netherlands.

Nabaghan Ojha, from our partner, the Regional Center for Development Cooperation in India, sums up over a decades' long experience work on NTFPs.

Robert Leo from Keystone, an expert in honey, shares his impressions from his visit to Indonesian partner Riak Bumi, also involved in honey work.

Our team-up with Telapak from Bogor, Indonesia has been fruitful and we have two new films showcasing NTFP-related work. "Voices from the Forest" and "Profiting from Honey" tell the stories behind the products. You can expect more exciting films in the near future.

Finally, this year's regional NTFP meeting, was shared by the newest member of the NTFP-EP fold, Joanna de Rozario. She will be working with friends in Malaysia and Indonesia as the regional coordinator. Our warmest welcome to Joanna! - Aloisa Zamora-Santos

J. DE BEER



Joanna hard at work at the recent regional meeting.

The NTFP-EP Secretariat ■ **Jenne de Beer**, Executive Director/Field Coordinator **Maria Cristina S. Guerrero**, Deputy Director **Joanna de Rozario**, Regional Facilitator for Malaysia and Indonesia **Maria Teresa Padilla-Matibag**, Resource Mobilisation & Programme Development Officer **Aloisa Zamora-Santos**, Information Management Officer

our readers ...

J. DE BEER



Yes, he was on our cover, last issue. Family members gather around and excitedly peruse the pages of *Voices*.

exchange news

Around the region from April - October 2005

J. DE BEER



Indigenous Peoples' Sustainable Management of Land and Forest Resources

Organized by the NTFP-EP, in collaboration with Persatuan Orang Asli Semenanjung Malaysia (POASM) and Borneo Resources Institute (BRIMAS), two separate seminars were held in Kuching and Kuala Lumpur from 21-23 April. They were designed to facilitate the sharing of experiences on sustainable forest management amongst participants from the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia.

National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) chairperson, Atty. Reuben Lingating, was the keynote speaker at both occasions. He shared the experience of Philippine indigenous peoples struggling for recognition prior to the Indigenous peoples Rights Act was passed into law in 1997. Since then, the NCIP, which is mandated to implement various programmes for IPs, had experienced both successes and challenges. Now, it is confronted with issues on conflicting management prerogatives over ancestral domains and the need for harmonization of laws.

Other speakers included Stephanus Djuweng (SEGERAK, Pontianak) and attorneys Baru Bian and Harrison Ngau, both based in Miri. Djuweng inspired the audience with concrete examples of how indigenous communities can drive their own economic agenda, while the legal experts explained the concepts of native Customary Rights and native customary land based on the Land Code of 1958.

It was stressed that under section 66 of the Code, native rights to forest land are explicitly recognized. This even applies to land that is *pulau ulit* (sacred forest), where under customary law the only activities allowed are hunting and the gathering of NTFPs. Examples were given and the speakers/lawyers advised the audience not to believe claims made by certain quarters that the natives don't have any rights at all!

FROM MALAYSIA PROCEEDINGS



A question raised during the seminars in Malaysia was: What plan takes precedence? Is it the IP's or plans by other stakeholders and/or government instrumentalities?

India NTFP Plan

The collaboration between NTFP-EP main partners in India is getting more intensive. In June, the organisations composed a plan of action covering five states in the Western and Eastern Ghats. The plan, while dealing with such products as wild mango, mahua, tamarind, honey (of course!) as well as various medicinal plants and ingredients for cosmetics, addresses

issues of

- ▶ securing sustainability of the harvest
- ▶ product development and marketing
- ▶ policies affecting their trade

It is further envisaged that the strengthening of initiatives on the ground will offer a platform for a future lobby campaign. The campaign will be directed at convincing policy makers to work on an overhaul of the obsolete institutions and regulations, which obstruct efforts to improve the (often dire) income situation of tribal NTFP collectors in The Ghats.

Top two photos: Village meeting in Pune District, Maharashtra where the trade in hilda nuts and amla berries was discussed. The villagers are also worried about their possible displacement. Because they have managed their forest so well, the area may be declared a national park.

A Future Beneath the Trees

Philippine partners Perla Espiel of AnthroWatch and Marvin 'Bong' Geolina of Father Vincent Cullen Tulugan Learning and Development Center (Bukidnon) represented the NTFP-EP at an international symposium from 25-27 August. The conference was organized by the Centre for Non-Timber Resources of Royal Roads University, Victoria, BC, Canada. {For more, see article in Not By Timber Alone, October 2005}

CustomMade and MODI handicrafts were a hit at the "Shop the Wilds" fair held in the open fields of the university. Bong Geolina mans the shop.



P. ESPIEL



J. DE BEER

Buzz in Banjarmasin

Updates during the second meeting of the Forest Honey Network Indonesia from 21-23 September revealed that the network has grown in a short time to eight sites in Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Sumatra. Further extension is foreseen in 2006. Together, the network partners now deal with a potential volume of an estimated 200 tonnes of *Apis dorsata* honey.

Keystone honey technician Robert Leo contributed much appreciated advice. {For some of his observations, turn to page 6.}

And some real exciting news was brought by Bogor-based BioCert, represented by Pak Agung Prawoto.

He announced that his organization had selected the network for a pilot for organic certification. The best part of the story is that the certification will come free of charge.



J. DE BEER

Honey handling in Danau Sentarum, a key site of the Forest Honey Network

Fair Trade of Indigenous Crafts

This year's crafts conference gathered over 50 indigenous craft makers, NGO supporters and government representatives in 20-22 October in Manila. NTFP-EP partners Tran Thi Hoa (TEW/CHESH/CIRD/CIRUM, Vietnam), Ibu Patmawati (P3R, Indonesia) and Tri Renya

Altaria (Dian Niaga, Indonesia) joined Philippine partners in learning the concept of fair trade, particularly

of handicrafts. Among the inspirations of fair trade in practice was Salay Handmade Paper Industries of Misamis, whose handmade paper and pressed flower creations – now exporting to Europe and the USA for over a decade – provides employment to an entire community. Among the most heatedly discussed issues was that of Intellectual Property Rights of indigenous peoples and their traditional designs.

In a mini-marketing session during the conference, Hoa (left) shows off a traditional design of silk skirt woven by women belonging to the Thai ethnic minority people. Her group works with on issues of fair trade, medicinal herbs and rattan and bamboo. Meanwhile, Ibu Alty (top photo, right) and Ibu Patma discuss how traditional Indonesian basket designs inspired Dian Niaga's exquisite handbags.



ALOISA SANTOS

ALOISA SANTOS



On-the-job in Manila

Sales staff of Keystone and Riak Bumi spent 10 days (August 5-17) at the Upland Marketing Foundation (UMFI) and CustomMade Crafts Center (CMCC) in Manila for on-the-job training in marketing. {Read their impressions and learnings starting page 2.}

Regional Meeting in Lambir

The annual EP Regional Meeting this year took place in Lambir National Park, Sarawak, Malaysia last 4-8 October.

More than 50 participants from Malaysia and the region attended, most of them for the first time. The meeting turned out to be a real morale booster and confidence builder for many. {See full article on page 10.}

European Tour (à la Modi) By NOLA P. ANDAYA, Non-Timber Forest Products-Task Force, The Philippines



Modi has come a long way – about 16 hours by plane across the Asian continent to the old continent and back – that is. Kidding aside, Modi is indeed going places, after taking the Manila fashion and home retail world by storm, starting the “modern indigenous” craze, and gracing the glossy pages of upscale fashion magazines, lifestyle section of newspapers and primetime television. Now, it has set its eyes on conquering the sophisticated European market.

Through the Special Facility Project of the European Commission

Delegation to the Philippines, I together with Tracie Anglo-Dizon, volunteer Creative Designer of Modi Modern Indigenous, went on a market/trade exploratory mission to Europe last August-September. Three markets were explored for both product lines of the CustomMade Crafts Center. These were the mainstream market for gift and fashion/home accessories, the high-end/designer market and the Fair Trade Market.

I should say, work has never been this fun

Window shopping and jetsetting through Europe, we went to various design shops in the Netherlands (Amsterdam/Utrecht), Belgium (Antwerp) and France (Paris) to get a feel of the current designer-oriented market. Together with Leo Wallage, a consultant for handicrafts marketing to Europe, and ProFound staff, we went to three trade fairs: Tendence Lifestyle 2005 in Frankfurt, Germany (August 27-29), Maison et Objet in Paris, France (September 1-5), and Trademart in Utrecht, Netherlands (September 6) to observe existing product lines, competition, and the market for gift/fashion/home accessories. We also visited the Fair Trade Organization in the Netherlands and Magasin du Monde in Belgium were also visited. Exploratory discussions were conducted with potential clients through the assistance of ProFound and Leo

Wallage and through contacts made during the visit in the trade fair.

The Market

Based on interviews with some participants in the trade shows, the general economic situation has affected the home and gift industry. However, players are still optimistic. According to other participants and handicrafts consultants, there are still opportunities for new items that have not been seen in the market. Also, while there is a general downturn in the industry, people are still keen on making livable places; so while they are cutting back on buying furniture, they have turned to home accessories and decorative items to update the look of their homes or to replace worn out items [1]. But because of the present economic situation, consumers are more conservative. Generally, they look for fashionable items at reasonable prices. According to another importer, there are still buyers who are interested in high value products as long as they see that the price is commensurate to the quality, design and perceived value [2].

Going around the cities of Amsterdam, Brussels, Antwerp and Paris, there is a small but thriving market for designer-oriented products both for the home and fashion. The existence of the shops shows that there are people who do buy and support this industry. Beyond the function and aesthetics, beyond the products themselves, designer shops sell ideas, concepts, image and the name.

The fair trade market is also thriving. Fair trade organizations are practicing sophisticated marketing – crossing over to the mainstream market – in order to reach a wider market. Magasin du Monde of Belgium has maintained a good standing by actively promoting, investing and directly working with their suppliers in product development and designs thus making the products more interesting for the buyers.

However, while it's more difficult to hook up with fair trade organizations as they are keen on developing their current partners than accepting new ones, there remain opportunities for breaking into the fair trade market. Now, more and more private

Sharing of experience & learning from Indonesia by ROBERT LEO, Keystone Foundation, India

Salamat Pagi, Indonesia. The honey hunters; either Anthario in Indonesia or Rengasamy in India – a unique similarity is embedded in these people's skill. The standout quietness, leaning by watching hours together is absolutely the same. It was a great opportunity to meet indigenous honey gatherers, Zul (artist)

and development friends to share and learn during the 2nd National Wild Honey Gatherers Workshop in Banjarmasin, Indonesia.

The Strength of the Partners. The network comprised a collective of partners with different qualities –conservation groups, researchers, marketing experts, community leaders and development groups—is a positive one through which strong initiatives is possible.

The Resource. Tropical honey is the finest blend of nectars of multi-melliferous sources from herbal plants to rainforest trees. The year-round availability and harvest of honey from different provinces is true evidence of the biodiversity of the region and the efficient honey production by the king (or rather queen!) of all

bees, the giant honey bee *Apis dorsata*. The estimated quantum by all partners exceeds to 230 metric tonnes, which is not simple to handle in a tropical climate and under Asiatic conditions.

Though the workshop addressed marketing of honey, it is interesting to note that the interaction gradually paved the importance of quality, handling, recognition to indigenous wisdom, lobbying to habitat protection into the vision and mission of the network partners.

The Challenges for Indonesian Honeys

1. Moisture content; the tropical honey has high moisture content at the time of collection itself.

2. Collected in remote areas and in a difficult environment for proper storing. One could understand that every kilo of honey is in transit for a period of two to three weeks before it gets packed into a bottle. Over this period, the honey is exposed to different temperatures and stored in different types of containers, which together is critical to maintaining the quality.

3. Basic awareness of the origin of the honey, better understanding of the bee's life cycle (which relates to the natural resources) and a change in land use, which currently leads to a reduction of the total forest area.

4. Need to build a local market; the restriction and refusal of the European market for acacia, palm plantation honey enlightens the



ROBERT LEO

companies are practicing fair trade. These companies are always on the look out for new items that have good designs and prices.

Other markets that can be explored for the Crafts Center are the stationery industry, and the textile and home textile industry. The flower arrangement accessory industry is also another market that can be tapped for NTFPs.

I came. I saw. I will export.

Preparations to break into the European market are underway. Contacts made during the visit are being followed up. Also, organizers of the German trade show, Tendence Lifestyle has given Modi a free stand in the show for three consecutive years – a really great opportunity to introduce Modi and CustomMade to the market. Products and designs are going through some “reconstruction” to fit the European taste. Producer groups, through the facilitation of the Enterprise Development Specialists, are being prepped for the new challenge. There is still a lot to be done in order for the Crafts Center to export successfully but we are well on our way.

NOTES: [1] Interview with Antoinette Gast, September 2005, Amsterdam, Netherlands. Gast is a consultant of CBI for handicrafts and work with Latin American and Asian countries. [2] Interview with owner of Only Natural, Amsterdam

PHOTOS: Previous page: Fair Trade Retail shop in Utrecht, Clockwise this page: Fashion spreads and articles on Modi, Wholesale shop of the Fair Trade Organization in the Netherlands, Furnishing Shop in Utrecht featuring ethnic products, NTFPs for flower arrangement accessories at the Flower Auction in the Netherlands



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UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE, ALL PHOTOS BY NOLA ANDAYA

need for natural forest conservation, to be taken up into positive manner.

The Way Forward

- ▶ Training on basics of honey processing and handling.
- ▶ Better equipment to handle honey.
- ▶ Standard laboratory (centralized) support.
- ▶ Capacity building to the primary groups: not just to sell, but also to gradually build links from the forest to the consumer.
- ▶ Explore high potential for value-added bee products; habitat role has to be generated to sustain the activity.
- ▶ If simple units are established locally to pack with strict specifications, then this may help to keep quality up, while also benefiting the local community!
- ▶ Exploring and designing solar wax extractors exclusively to melt wax locally.
- ▶ A resource inventory focusing on the role of bees in the biodiversity balance and measures to promote forest regeneration as the natural habitat of the bees. This could be a useful exercise with long-term benefits to communities and policymakers alike.
- ▶ The Indonesian standard agency BioCert could play an important role in setting export standard and facilitation. At the same time, the agency should understand the ecology of bees and social aspects of the collectors.

The short excursions. The trip included a short visit to an island. The vegetation in the island strikes the original vegetation of the region. The mangroves, ferns, shrubs, trees, fish and monkeys need propaganda from the citizens. If a local partner could take up an awareness camp, for instance, and generate information about the island's ecology, that would be a great start for others to follow elsewhere in Indonesia.

The lifestyle and social aspects gives almost the native feeling to me. The floating market environment is an amazing experience – except the number of logs around the place.

Thanks. I sincerely appreciate the hospitality of the Dian Niaga team members especially: Terimah kasih Mr. Johnny, a wonderful person and all other members of the network. I express my heartfelt thanks to Pak Heri of Riak Bumi for all his communications and arrangements. I thank Mr. Jenne for the opportunity to learn and share the experiences. My sincere thanks also to Keystone for the privilege given to me. I would like to be in regular interaction with all of you – friends of Indonesia!

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BERTJAN OTTEENS

towards sustainable management of NTFPs

By Nabaghan Ojha, Regional Centre for Development Cooperation, India



Sundrying of mahua flowers

Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFPs) are paramount to tribal livelihood that features predominantly in forest dwellers' life in terms of subsistence and income generation. It has been found during the current years that NTFPs are the only saviour to socio-economic development. Now this sector is the spotlight of many environmentalists and researchers across the globe. Its contribution to the economy in most

countries is significant and in India, it provides about 40 percent of total official forest revenues and 55 percent of forest-based employment. Nearly 500 million people living in and around forests in India rely on NTFPs as a critical component for their sustenance (World Resources Institute, 1990). Due to its great importance in terms of tribal livelihood, most of the policies of the government of India in forestry sector try to decentralise the powers kept with the states and as result most of the tribal dominated states bestowed the ownership rights of selected NTFPs with Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs).

Orissa has one of the largest tribal concentrations as compared to its neighbouring states, i.e. 22% of its population belongs to scheduled tribes. More than 6 million tribal people depend heavily on forest produces for their subsistence. In most of the forested areas of Orissa, forest produces have been supporting tribals for more than 6-8 months a year, both in terms of subsistence and cash benefit. For quite some time, the trade of NTFPs was monopolised mostly by private business houses who were granted long-term leases to procure specific forest produces from specific forest divisions. Such monopolies created problems of low payment to tribals, erratic and arbitrary procurement, and revenue loss to the state. Therefore, in order to streamline the system of collection and disposal of NTFPs, which are major source of livelihood of the rural poor, the State Government came out with a new policy guideline in 2000 following the decentralisation process. This gives ownership rights of 68 Minor Forest Produces (MFP) to the Gram Panchayat (village councils, the smallest unit of local self-governance). Five years have already passed

but the policy has been unable to provide any significant benefit to the primary collectors of NTFPs. For most NTFPs, there is no structured trade route nor institutional set-up. Because of poor awareness and low returns from the sale of NTFPs, primary collectors are engaged in unsustainable harvesting practices that in turn affect the ecological health of the forest.

RCDC's stake

For improved governance in the NTFP sector, RCDC intervened in the sector with the basic premise that forest dwellers are able to process and market their forest produces especially NTFPs in lieu of fair prices and ensuring their livelihood. Since then, RCDC has been involved in enriching the information base of different stakeholders on NTFP management and trade, enhancing



Selling mahua flowers in the local haat

the understanding of different stakeholders on NTFP management and trade, emphasising cooperative and collaborative action for addressing the issues in NTFP management and trade, working with market agencies and financial institutions to promote the enterprises and trade in NTFPs, establishing dialogue with different players for fair trade and favourable policy environment of

NTFP, working towards identification of appropriate

technology and its use in value addition of NTFPs, among others.

During the years, intervention has been focused on capacity building of primary collectors and their organisations for sustainable harvesting of NTFPs, value addition, negotiating skills etc., promotion of cooperatives among the self-help groups (SHGs) and federating them into an apex body to enter into market, promotion of district market promotion board/committees through involvement of district administration for monitoring the NTFP management and trade, market survey and market research for selected NTFPs, policy advocacy, etc. Efforts have always been made to empower the groups for sustainable management of NTFP resources both economically and ecologically.

Significant Outputs

The years of intervention in this sector has been able to identify important markets in the country as well as within



the state and has established good rapport with important players in these markets for information on NTFP trade and market support. People in the project area are now aware of current price arrangements of different NTFP and accordingly they are now bargaining with local traders for a hike in the procurement price.

Selected SHGs are now able to meet the quality parameters set by different industries especially in Kalmegh, Harra, Bahada, Dhawai flower and nux vomica. A database on NTFP management and trade has been developed which is being used by different stakeholders. A website (www.banajata.org) full of information on management and trade of NTFP

has been launched and is updated regularly. Small booklets in the regional language providing valuable information for different stakeholders on NTFP management, value addition and cultivation are being published and disseminated among the primary collectors and their organisations.

Cooperatives have been formed in different clusters and are directly involved in procurement, processing and marketing of NTFPs. In some districts, the district administration has agreed to constitute market promotion committee to deal with management and trade of NTFP. The tribal people are now able to process their produces at primary level and their bargaining power has been increased to some extent. Instead of selling raw produces, they have been able to sell value-added produces. The action has created opportunities for the primary collectors and their

organisations to come together to share experiences and knowledge of market information, the value chain and barriers of trade, improved business practices, etc.

A move towards sustainable management of NTFPs

Recently strategies have been developed to create a good understanding among the primary collectors/producers of NTFP on the ecological health of forest. Focus is on sustainable management of both NTFP and forest. An inventory on NTFP and MAP is being prepared with due assessment of threats to the NTFP and medicinal species. Sustainable management protocols would be developed for some

selected NTFP and the SHGs, cooperatives and the primary collectors in general would be trained on these protocols. Forest conservation would be initiated in the area with proper forest and NTFP management plans. Regular ecological studies/

assessments to assess the threats to forest

would be undertaken.

More emphasis is now on enterprise development of important NTFPs. Efforts are being made to create a resource centre for providing business development services to primary cooperatives, forest protection committees, local NGOs, for promotion of enterprises. Regular dialogue would be continued with different agencies in the government and private sectors for setting up small enterprises on NTFPs. Cooperatives are being trained for negotiation with financial institutions for setting up small-scale enterprises on selected NTFPs like honey, amla,

tamarind, chironjee, etc. Their capacity would also be built so that they could negotiate with trading houses for better trade arrangement. They could also establish dialogue with different stakeholders for a better policy environment which include community based forest management, community based enterprise management of NTFP and also for a liberal policy framework in the context of NTFP.

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RDCDC



Procurement of dhataki flowers

Book Review

Moktan, M. R., Norbu, L., Dukpa, K., Rai, T.B., Dhendup, K. and Gyeltshen, N. 2004. **Bamboo and Cane: Potential of Poor Man's Timber for Poverty Alleviation and Forest conservation. A case study from Bjoka, Zhemgang, Central Bhutan.**

Renewable Natural Resources Research Centre, Yusipang/Council of RNR research for Bhutan/Ministry of Agriculture, Thimphu. (89 pages, with illustrations)

This publication presents the findings of a study on bamboo and canes from Bjoka geog in central Bhutan. The study assesses the role of those two NTFPs in the subsistence as well as in the market economy. It further covers such issues as local resource management, indigenous knowledge and postharvest practices. Finally, constraints and opportunities as well as vulnerability status to commercialisation.

Bjoka geog consists of mostly marginal lands for agriculture and the community has specialised itself in craft making, which is reflected in the fact that 60% of gross household income is derived from that activity.

Among the authors' recommendations:

- ▶ Support forest resource management based on formal community-based organisations.
- ▶ Prioritize the domestic (tourist) market, which is less challenging than the overseas market.
- ▶ Encourage diversification through innovative design in order to enlarge the market.
- ▶ Encourage the use of natural dyes to foster aesthetic values.
- ▶ Introduce product labeling. The labels should contain information on the source of origin and the raw materials used.

The book is a must-read for all those who are interested in NTFP development in Bhutan.

As hard copies are already limited, you may request an electronic copy through: lnorbu@druknet.bt or mrmoktan@yahoo.com



A time for Learning

By JOANNA DE ROZARIO



J. DE BEER

Pak Abang joining in the fun at the culmination of the regional meeting

I have worked on the loss of land rights caused by deforestation and forest conversion these past years without realising how much the forest had to offer local communities. I joined the Regional Meeting on Indigenous NTFP Development and Resource Management in early October with little knowledge of NTFPs, only to find out that there was a long list of plants and trees that could be used for a large variety of uses. However, there were many lessons to be learnt as NTFP production faces new frontiers in marketing and production techniques, global demand and threats to its natural resource. This awed and baffled me as I heard the many stories shared by the host country Malaysia and across Southeast Asia and India.

Day 1... The Dayak Iban and Penan of Sarawak started the meeting by intensely listing all the NTFPs they used on a daily and not-so-daily basis. It was in their local language and I lost count as the list was numerous. However, they both mentioned the need to develop these products to meet market standards and the means to market them.

Interestingly, the sharing from the Bidayuh Kadazan sub-ethnic group of Sarawak on *kasah* mats cautioned the participants on focusing on developing a market and marketable products without also looking at the access and availability of the natural resource. It was a success story with a tragic ending. The *kasah* mats made from tree bark and rattan were developed to meet market standards and was promoted in Peninsular Malaysia and abroad. It became a huge success and I can vouch for that as my parents, sister and a number of relatives and friends houses are adorned with these mats. The demand for *kasah* mats was phenomenal to the extent that the local communities in Sarawak could not meet the demand due to the lack of rattan. In the end, they lost the entire market to Kalimantan.

There was also no shortage of NTFPs in Peninsular Malaysia. We anxiously waited for the presenter from the Semelai tribe to begin as he had brought along a bottle of liquor from forest fruits (*tampoi*). Sadly we had no chance to gulp down any in the

pretext of tasting. He also caused a controversy with the resin (*keruing* oil) he had brought from his village. The NTFP experts whom I shall not name were baffled by the high price it fetched as well as the quality and texture. One of the experts found the answer in a book he had written (De Beer, Jenne & McDermott, Melanie J. 1986. **The Economic Value of NTFPs in SEA**). It was from a different species of tree besides the usual dipterocarps used for resin production.

In Sabah, the PACOS representative fascinated us with the implementation of *tagal*, a traditional form of natural resource management of fish stocks. It was a success story as *tagal* was being adopted by relevant state agencies with penalties enforceable by the traditional committees. *Tagal* will also be taken further to cover other natural resources i.e., forest, wildlife, etc.

We ended the day with NTFP-EP's debut into the National Geographic Channel with its **Voices from the Forest** video. It showcased stories on the Penan's dependence on NTFPs and the forest, the Ikalahan tribe in the Philippines defending their traditional forest by developing a market for its products, the development of Modi (Modern Indigenous) in the Philippines which brings together modern designers and traditional artisans from local communities to develop marketable handicrafts and fashion, and finally, the sustainable harvest and production and marketing of wild honey in Danau Sentarum, Indonesia.

Day 2... The second day was set aside for sharing of experiences from outside of Malaysia. Indonesia shared about honey production, marketing and development. The local community representatives shared the various techniques used to create a hive, harvest honey sustainably and process it efficiently and hygienically in order to meet higher product standards. This was briefly highlighted in the video showed the night before. The NGO, Riak Bumi, assists local communities in promoting and marketing their honey – fetching double the price.

In the Philippines, Pastor Delbert Rice who chose

to live with the Ikalahan tribe 50 years ago, jointly fought to protect their traditional forest by not only harvesting NTFPs from the forest but also processing them into jams and jellies. As the community lives far from

NTFP-EP FILE PHOTO



A colorful welcome to the Timboo Longhouse

urban Manila, the development, marketing and product research is conducted by a foundation they had formed called Upland Marketing Foundation. So far, there has been a steady demand for UMFI's jams and jellies; the community has also ventured into the production of bottled water.

The experiences shared by India, Vietnam and Cambodia all spoke about the overexploitation of a specific natural resource. It was amazing for me to discover that the desserts and drinks I've been consuming since I was a child were actually made from NTFPs and also shared with neighbouring countries i.e., Vietnam (*liana* leaves which produce a herbal jelly known as *cincau* or *leng kong*) and Cambodia (malva nuts when soaked in water expands into an edible gel substance eaten in deserts). Both these plants were being threatened by overharvesting.

In the evening, we watched a stunning video by Keystone, India about the Kurumba honey gatherers in the Blue Mountains. The local gatherers basically balanced from roots of plants hanging over a 100 meter cliff in the midst of smoke and a zillion buzzing bees to scoop colossal honey hives. It was obviously a dangerous stunt which they faced once a year as it was their traditional livelihood. However, as all other natural resources, the forest in which the tribal communities depend on for NTFPs and where the bee hives are located are being threatened by tea plantations.

day 3... It's field trip day and there are smiles all around as we gather in front of the vans that would take two groups to two long houses. My group was going to Timboo Longhouse. We were met by traditional music and dance that led us through the long house where we were greeted by a long queue of just about everyone who lived in the longhouse. The Timboo Longhouse and communal land that the people depend on hold a long history which is now being threatened by oil palm oil. Timboo Longhouse has taken its case to the courts

NTFP-EP FILE PHOTO



A bevy of song and dance from the women and children of Sarawak during the field trip

and their lawyers are optimistic on a favourable outcome but the people must stay united and resilient in their struggle. The visiting participants from each country shared advice and experiences with the Timboo community in the hopes of further strengthening their cause and providing motivation, encouragement and solidarity. However, it was unfortunate that our group was unable to take a walk through the forest due to heavy rainfalls to identify the many NTFPs that are present. We drove briefly around the area and spotted mostly the agriculture areas planted with pepper, rubber and fruit gardens.

day 4... The final day, our minds saturated with input and exposure,

we now had to cough it up to make sense of it all and on what could be done next. We had four break-out groups with the themes Lobby, Natural Resource Management, Land Rights and Economic Concerns. The questions that were forwarded in the discussions helped us analyse the situation in Malaysia and highlight the main issues, provide possible steps forward, and help determine each organisation's concrete contribution in implementing these activities and discuss the outcomes. Each group presented its discussion points which led to a few activities that could potentially be implemented. The seminar was concluded with Jenne de Beer and Crissy Guerrero presenting their views on how we could further implement these suggestions.

We ended the day and the conference with a bang of colour and culture from Malaysia, the rest of Southeast Asia and India. I was intoxicated by the variety of people and dances and songs as well as by the rice wine that was served in abundance. It was heartwarming for me to see both young and old enjoy a similar form of entertainment, rarely seen in the 'modern' world. It was a deserving end to a productive four-day meeting that was reflected in the diversity, warmth and earnest commitment of the people present. I heard that some of us sang and danced all night through. I only made it to 4 in the morning.

Film Review

Appiko (To Embrace). An inspirational story of a non-violent grassroots movement that arose in the villages of South India.

Once in a while, you watch a film which brings you to the heart of the matter. The heart in this case being made of inspired people who show the world a way forward – away from environmental and social hardship – and onto a path that is straightforward, bringing us to concrete living examples of people caring for nature and for other people's well-being.

This film on the Appiko Movement, developed by the Rainforest Information Centre (Australia) in collaboration with Appiko, narrates the story of a broad-based grassroots movement in the forested mountainous Western Ghats range in South West India. The people starting Appiko, meaning in local Kanada 'hug the tree,' obtained their inspiration from the women-led Chipko movement in North India's Himalayan foothills. Appiko emerged during the late 1970s as a vigilant mass movement, supported by thousands of villagers living along the Western Ghats, notably in the state of Karnataka, but also in Kerala. Merchants, accountants and other city-based people started to sympathize with the message and mission of Appiko and provided

tangible assistance in the form of free office space, food provisions to sustain people during marches, etc.

Appiko was able to persuade the government, supported by media accounts, eminent scientists and so forth, to introduce a ban on the felling of green trees in Western Ghats in Karnataka. Furthermore, Appiko challenged large dams, mining, river-polluting paper factories and other destructive 'development' projects. Changing socio-economic and cultural circumstances challenge Appiko to adapt its strategies.

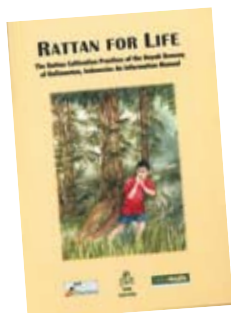
Today, 25 years later, Appiko remains active and its message even more valuable than ever. It offers villagers, NGOs and policymakers a vision, an alternative avenue of sustainable development, based on long-term prudent exploitation of forest resources, with an emphasis on extraction of non-timber forest products, organic agriculture, renewable energy, among others.

My advice: order this film, watch it and share it widely. You do yourself and others a service. (PAUL WOLFEKAMP, BOTH ENDS)

For your copy, please contact John Seed, Rainforest Information Centre. Email: rainforestinfo@ozemail.com.au. URL: www.rainforestinfo.com.au

The IHT of 14 December 2000 reports the development of two new anti-malaria formulas. The newspaper says both drugs contain 'forms of artemisinin, a relatively new malaria drug developed in China from the sweet wormwood plant'. However, the extract from *Artemisia annua* has been known for its anti-malaria properties for many centuries. If that is 'relatively new', what then is not? This demonstrates the fact that 'relatively new' is such a relative concept!

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Rattan for Life in Khmer. The manual describing the traditional system of rattan cultivation in secondary forest as practiced by the Dayak Benuaq of Kedang Pahu, was so far only available in Bahasa Indonesia, English and Tagalog (Filipino). The booklet is

now being translated in Khmer by the Community Forestry Alliance for Cambodia. Release of the Khmer version is expected in January 2006. For more information, please contact: CFAC, 15, Street #312, Sangkat Tonle Bassac, Khan Chamkar Morn, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Tel/Fax: 855-23-220714



Voices from the Forest. Balancing Forest Use and Conservation in Southeast Asia. The

namesake of this newsletter, the

NTFP Exchange Programme captures the stories of indigenous peoples living in or near tropical forests in Southeast Asia, and their dependence on non-timber forest products for their survival as a people and as a culture. Through their voices as well as of some of their supporters, we share in their dreams and aspirations, as well as their fears as the rapidly changing world poses new challenges to their indigenous lifestyles.

We are offered a rare peek into:

- ▶ the nomadic Penan's reliance on sago palm in the face of threats from a large logging company (Malaysia),
- ▶ traditional and sustainable harvesting, production and marketing of wild honey in Danau Sentarum (Indonesia),
- ▶ the Ikalahan tribe's struggle to protect their traditional forest by transforming fruits of the forest into jams and jellies for the high-end niche market (the Philippines),
- ▶ the Higaonon tribe's indigenous fabric, the *hinabol*, tied to traditional management of abaca (Manila Hemp) and the fast-disappearing art of *hinabol* weaving (the Philippines), and
- ▶ the crucial market links provided by the Upland Marketing Foundation and the CustomMade Crafts Center, and their tireless efforts at aiding local communities to develop marketable handicrafts and food products.

Produced by Riak Bumi, Telapak and the NTFP-EP (2005). Copies (DVD or VCD, 43 mins.) can be obtained through Ridzki Sigit, Telapak, Jl. Palem Putri III No. 1-3, Komp. Taman Yasmin Sektor V, Bogor, West Java, Indonesia. Tel: +62 0251 7159902. Email: rrsigit@telapak.org. URL: www.telapak.org

Publications and videos are distributed free of charge to our partners and contacts as far as stocks allow.

Profiting from Honeybees.

This film looks into the traditional and sustainable honey harvesting methods of the community living around Lake Sentarum, one of Southeast Asia's largest wetlands. Produced by Riak Bumi, Telapak and the NTFP-EP (2005). To get your copy (DVD or VCD, 24 mins.), contact Ridzki Sigit: Jl. Palem Putri III No. 1-3, Komp. Taman Yasmin Sektor V, Bogor, West Java, Indonesia. Tel: +62 0251 7159902. Email: rrsigit@telapak.org. URL: www.telapak.org



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The NTFP-EP is a collaborative network of about 40 non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations in South and Southeast Asia. We work with forest-based communities to strengthen their capacity in sustainable management of natural resources.

On our Calendar

NOVEMBER 2005

Two staff of the CustomMade Craft Centre (CMCC) in Manila attended a TMF livelihood training in Danau Sentarum, Indonesia & visited EP partner Riak Bumi

DECEMBER 2005

12-17 December, Malinau, Kalimantan:

Oil Palm Conference, organized by LP3M and supported by BothENDS and NTFP-EP. At issue is a recent plan by the government of Indonesia to convert 1.5 million hectares of forest land along the border with Malaysia into oil palm plantations. Invited are representatives of the affected Dayak communities, the regent of Kabupaten Malinau and other local government officials, religious leaders, national NGOs, among them SawitWatch, Telapak, WALHI, and Sabah-based PACOS Trust.

JANUARY 2006

17 January, Bogor:

Workshop EP/Riak Bumi, in collaboration with BioCert 'developing community internal monitoring system for certification of NTFPs, in particular for forest honey and wild cinnamon.'

23-24 January, Manila:

Virtual Academy Forum. A discussion with the author, Dr. Mary Stockdale, around implementation of the manual "Steps to sustainable and community-based NTFP management." Invited are DENR staff, NGOs and representatives of the academe.

MARCH 2006

End of March, Visakhapatnam

(Andhra Pradesh):

gum and resin workshop organized by RCDC in collaboration with the NTFP-EP. The workshop will discuss possible market intervention strategies on the basis of two studies, currently in preparation, into the constraints in the value chain of this important product group. Participants invited are from different parts of the Eastern and Western Ghats, as well as from Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Cambodia.

MARCH/APRIL

March/April: SIERES (Saigon) expert Dr. Truong will visit the province of Ratanakiri, in Cambodia to assist local NGO NTFP Ratanakiri with impact assessment of current harvesting practices for valuable and wild-growing malva nuts.



Brou Ikkavet women and children in Kok Lak, Cambodia