



Vive Le Task Force!

Two years after its inception, the NTFP Task Force is up and running again!

It has recently been revived through the assistance of the NTFP Exchange Programme and grassroots NGOs and POs, and with the financial support of ICCO and the Netherlands Committee-International Union for the Conservation of Nature (NC-IUCN). An NTFP desk has therefore been established under the UNAC structure.



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Products from Mountain Peaks

The air was crisp as the clouds slowly lifted to their heavenly waiting place.

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	<div data-bbox="560 479 1302 600"> <h1>NOT BY TIMBER ALONE</h1> </div> <div data-bbox="560 600 1302 898"> <p><i>Editor</i> Maria Cristina S. Guzman NTFP-EP/TAAG, Ponce</p> <p><i>Contributors:</i></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Elizabeth Q. Sanchez</td><td>IIND</td></tr> <tr><td>Jessie P. Oliver</td><td>IWW</td></tr> <tr><td>Eleonila O. Barua</td><td>NATURAL</td></tr> <tr><td>Benny Comatang</td><td>PNCTLOC</td></tr> <tr><td>Ma. Rita Quinsido</td><td>PNCTLOC</td></tr> <tr><td>Evelyn S. Sison</td><td>PNCTLOC</td></tr> <tr><td>Rene Quarta</td><td>UNP + UNAC</td></tr> <tr><td>Delbert Rice</td><td>KEP</td></tr> </table> </div>	Elizabeth Q. Sanchez	IIND	Jessie P. Oliver	IWW	Eleonila O. Barua	NATURAL	Benny Comatang	PNCTLOC	Ma. Rita Quinsido	PNCTLOC	Evelyn S. Sison	PNCTLOC	Rene Quarta	UNP + UNAC	Delbert Rice	KEP
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VIVE LE TASK FORCE ! *NTFP Task Force Revival*

Two years after its inception, the NTFP Task Force is up and running again!

The NTFP Task Force was a loose collaborative group formed in 1998 after the Upland NGO Assistance Committee (UNAC) and Enterprise Works Worldwide (EWW) - formerly know as Appropriate Technology International, organized the NTFP conference entitled "Exploring Commercially Viable Community-Based NTFP Enterprises-A Mechanism for Sustainable Resource Management". The Task Force was established to provide an ongoing mechanism to address the emerging needs of local communities and assisting organizations working on NTFP development. The Task Force had initial inspiring meetings, but unfortunately, lacked the human and financial resources to sustain regular operations.

The Task Force has recently been revived through the assistance of the NTFP-Exchange Programme, a collaboration of Dutch NGOs namely Profound and Both Ends, and grassroots NGOs and POs in Southeast Asia. Through the financial support of ICCO and Netherlands Committee - International Union for the Conservation of Nature (NC-IUCN), an NTFP desk has been established under the UNAC structure.

In August of this year, The Task Force re-convened a small body to review the mandate and plans of the original task force. This task force formed in 1998 included resource organizations from the government and private sectors. The body felt that it was important that the Task Force core group be composed only of NGOs and POs so as to further focus efforts on the promotion of local community interests. Resource organizations would then be accessed on an individual case to case basis when clear agendas had been set.

Currently, the Task Force includes the following organizations: the Upland Marketing Program (UMP) - UNAC, Enterprise Works Worldwide (EWW), Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF), Mangyan Mission, Samahan ng mga Nagkakaisang Mangyan Alangan (SANAMA), Broad Initiatives For Negros Development (BIND), Father Vincent Cullen Tulugan Learning and Development Center (FVCTLDC), Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan (NATRIPAL) and Women's Access Inc. (WAI).

The group's main objective is identified as follows:
"To organize, and maximize efforts in assisting local communities in the development of NTFPs as an important livelihood source and a focal element in sustainable resource management"

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The Task Force has identified the following areas of concern and initial action points:	
CONCERN	ACTIVITIES
Research and Information Awareness	Electronic-forum, Semi annual newsletter, Raid NTFP Survey

Policy Advocacy	Disseminating relevant policies and promoting NTFP incorporation in various tenurial instruments
Technology a)Resource Management	a)Exploring cost-effective mechanisms on NTFP inventory
b)Product Development	b) <i>Apis cerana</i> basket hive development
Market Promotion and Linkaging	Coordination with and support to UMP on NTFP marketing efforts, NTFP identification and simple market analysis
Capability Building and Exchange	Semi-annual Task Force Meetings
Resource Mobilization	Technical assistance in proposal preparation and donor linkaging

PRODUCTS FROM MOUNTAIN PEAKS

The air was crisp as the clouds slowly lifted to their heavenly waiting place.

We were at 1,400m asl. The day was Sept 13, 2000 and we were among the few of those outside the Higaonon tribe that had made it to this place atop mount Takdang. That's what Datu Mantangkilan said in his native Binukid tongue. Amay Mantangkilan Cumatang is the Chieftain of Sitio Mintapod, Bgy. Hagpa, a village in province of Bukidnon at the foothills of Takdang.

We were a motley group composed of staff from Father Vincent Cullen Tulugan Learning and Development Center (FVCTLDC), Riza, Evelyn, Benny and 'Nong Adi, as well as a representative from the neighboring cooperative and management group member, 'Nong Flori, and Crissy Guerrero, of the NTFP-Task Force. The group was ably led by Amay himself. Our mission was to conduct a preliminary identification of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) by performing a forest transect.

FVCTLDC has been working with the Higaonon in this area since 1994. Their intervention has been mainly in the fields of health, education and agriculture. FVCTLDC has also been assisting the Higaonon community members, especially the women, in improving their traditional weaving craft called "hinabol". From dry abaca fiber, a colorful tapestry of design is woven into bags and backpacks otherwise known as "kamuyot".

The "kamuyot" is only one of the NTFPs crafted by the Higaonon. In the recognition of the vast, untapped resource available in the forests within the Higaonon ancestral domain, FVCTLDC also requested for the preliminary identification of such resources, especially low-impact NTFPs.



Traversing the ancestral domain for 22 kms to complete the transect walk truly gave the group an idea of the diversity of the forest resources available to the Higaonon in the area. The group crossed 5 land use types including secondary forest, primary forests, communal and private agricultural

lands and agroforest areas. The team identified 14 rattan species, 10 ferns, 3 resin species, 2 bee species and 55 bird species. Especially valuable was the *Canarium* sp known as "lunay" in Binukid. "Lunay" is an aromatic resin species used locally as an appetizer, as lighting material and for lactating mothers. The species is used commercially for perfumes and incense.

Upon return, we joined with the other community members. Through the night we shared the process used for the participatory transect and together prepared the transect matrix. This was done both graphically in pictures and by documenting the relevant biophysical and socio-political characteristics observed during the

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transect walk such as elevation, soil type, geographic orientation, ownership and land-use. Each product and their current use was also listed as the document was written completely in the Binukid language. The transect matrix can serve as a contribution to the ancestral domain management plan which the Higaonon are currently drafting.

The Higaonon know the value of their forest treasures and are sometimes wary of the secrets of these resources. Mang Ronnie even questioned the purpose of the transect and cautioned against possible bio-prospecting. The Higaonon recognize their duty to protect their indigenous knowledge systems and practices. But it is also the humble wish of many, that maybe in the future, the controlled trade of some of these products can provide the needed income to break the repeated hunger cycle that plagues their families.

After a long and tiring day, we retired and slept soundly.

The clouds slowly descended again. This time, to couch our new found dreams and embrace our new found friendships.

By: Benny Cumatang, Ma. Riza Olimberio, Evelyn Sabate of FVCTLDC, and Ma. Cristina S. Guerrero

Why NTFPs? Why an NTFP Exchange Programme for Asia?

Introduction

South and Southeast Asia still witness forest depletion and degradation, mainly due to external interventions (eg. plantation development, logging, mining and infrastructure development). The economic hardship, social displacement and cultural decay of forest dependent communities persists within the context of denied rights to land tenure and forest extraction. These communities also often lack bargaining power vis-a-vis traders and/or corporations to negotiate prices for products derived from the forest.



Historically, forest-based communities have harvested Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) both for subsistence use and for additional income. NTFPs in Asia not only support basic livelihoods but provide the opportunity for forest conservation when these products are sustainably managed. Enterprises based on NTFPs have offered the needed alternative to the destruction of the region's forests.

Though promising local initiatives are working to further develop NTFPs in the region, coordination efforts need to be strengthened. Furthermore, many official programmes lack a direct outreach to local people and donor support is often scarce. Other local groups work in relative isolation and under unfavorable political and economic circumstances, thus requiring extension support and investment in local capability building.

The NTFP Exchange Programme for Asia

The NTFP Exchange Programme (NTFP - EP) for Asia emerged in response to the enormous needs and possibilities in the field of community-based forest management and NTFP development. It is a joint initiative of the Dutch based organizations, Both ENDS, NC-IUCN, and ProFound in collaboration with Philippine partners such as UNAC, NATRIPAL, Indonesian organizations namely PLASMA (Institute for Environment and People Empowerment), AMAN (Indonesian Alliance of Indigenous Peoples), TELAPAK (Research and advocacy group for local communities), and the Malaysian NGO, BRIMAS (Borneo Resources Institute). The Exchange Programme (EP) was developed in the recognition that struggles of partners are similar across the region, and that much could be learned from the exchange of experiences, strategies and traditions of individual partners. An example of such exchange is the interest of Indonesian and Malaysian partners in the relatively advanced Philippine legal framework on community-based forest management systems. Philippine partners, on the other hand, wish to learn about resource management practices of Indonesian forest based communities.

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The EP currently focuses on facilitating

- a) information exchange,
- b) exchange and exposure visits and,
- c) linkages between community groups/ grassroots NGOs and donor agencies/ resource organizations.

The Programme distinguishes itself from most other networks by striving to concretely address the practical needs of community constituents. The local partners themselves also shape and direct the Programme.

The Regional NTFP desk established in Manila and hosted by UNAC enables the Programme to transfer coordination responsibilities to the region. This desk also coordinates the Philippine NTFP Task Force which has also inspired the development of a similar Indonesian working group spearheaded by KP-SHK (Consortium for Community Based Forestry Management).

Beyond Asia

Promotion of the Exchange Programme concept and approach is also being adopted by organizations outside of Asia. NGOs in Africa, Russia, and the Amazon region have also signified their interest in starting similar programmes. Concrete steps have already been taken to establish an NTFP Exchange Programme for Zimbabwe, Zambia and neighboring countries. Similarly, BothEnds was also approached by the Coalition for the Amazon Programme (COAMA) to assist with NTFP development activities in the Colombian Amazon.

Lakbay-Aral sa Palawan, tagumpay!

Ni Joeriz P. Olbes, Community Development Officer -EWW

An article on the visit of NTFP Task Force members to the Community-based Forest Management (CBFM) area in Bgy. San Rafael, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

Tagumpay na isinakatuparan ang plano ng NTFP (Non-Timber Forest Products) Task Force na magsagawa ng isang Lakbay-Aral sa Palawan. Ginanap ito mula ika-13 hanggang 17 ng Nobyembre 2000 sa Bgy. San Rafael, Lungsod ng Puerto Princesa, Palawan at tinawag nila itong "Exploring Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) Development within the Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) Framework."



Napili ang Palawan dahil batid nito na tanyag ang Palawan sa pangangalaga sa likas na yamang gubat. Isinaalang-alang din nila na dito rin matatagpuan ang isa sa mga samahan na naunang pinagkalooban ng pangunahing proyekto ng DENR, ang tinatawag na Community Based Forest Management Project (CBFMP) noong Hunyo 1992.

Isinaalang-alang din nila ang katanyagan ang San Rafael, Tanabag, & Concepcion Multi-Purpose Cooperative (STCMPC) dahil sa nangunguna ito sa pagpapatupad ng mga proyekto ng DENR sa Palawan, katulad ng pagtatanim ng mga yantok, mga bungang kahoy at pangangalaga ng mga kabundukan. Ang STCMPC rin ay nabigyan ng pansamantalang pahintulot na paggamit (Interim Resource Use Permit) ng mga patay o tumba na kahoy sa loob ng isang taon.

Pangunahing layunin ng NTFP Task Force sa kanilang pagbisita sa Palawan ang maka-ugnay ang mga kinatawan ng iba't-bang samahan mula sa Isla ng Palawan, lalawaigan ng Negros at Manila.

Dumalo sa nasabing Lakbay-Aral ang mga kinatawan mula sa Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan (NATRIPAL), Indigenous People's Apostolate (IPA) -Palawan, Broad Initiatives for Negros Development (BIND), at Bagong-Silang Marcelo Katilingban sa Sustenidong Mangunguma (BSMKSM). Dumalo rin sina Gng. Veronica Flores, CBFMA Desk Officer mula sa CENRO Puerto Princesa City at si G. Pedro Nalica, Punong Barangay ng Bgy. San Rafael, Puerto Princesa City.



dumalong kasapi ng San Rafael, Tanabag, & Concepcion Multi-Purpose Cooperative (STCMPC) na pinangungunahan ni Chairman, Melquiades D. Rodriguez at Vice Chairman Jimmy Ca?ete.

Sa kanilang isinagawang

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ugnayan, sinikap nilang paghambingin ang kanilang mga kaalaman at karanasan ukol sa pangangalaga, paggamit ng mga kahoy at hindi kahoy na likas na yamang gubat. Pinag-usapan nila ang mga suliranin na kanilang naharap habang ang mga proyekto ay ipinatutupad at sinikap na bigyan ng kasagutan upang patuloy na maitaguyod ang mga layunin ng kani-kanilang mga samahan.

Masusi rin nilang pinag-aralan ang mahalagang papel na ginagampanan ng pamahalaang lokal, mga lokal na samahan, mga pangunahing tanggapan ng ating pamahalaan habang isinusulong ang iba-ibang proyekto ukol sa pangangalaga at limitadong paggamit ng mga likas-yamang gubat. Aktuwal nilang tiningnan ang mga kinalalagyan ng iba't-ibang gawain ng STCMPC sa kabundukan ng tatlong barangay na nasa loob ng CBFMA nila.

Ang Lakbay-Aral ng NTFP Philippine Task Force ay naisakatuparan sa tulong na rin ng EnterpriseWorks Worldwide (EWW), isang tanggapan na kilala sa pagtaguyod ng layunin na mapabuti ang pakinabang ng mga likas na yamang gubat, kahoy man o hindi kahoy, sa isang patuloy na gamit (sustainable use).

Matapos na maisakatuparan ang nasabing Lakbay-Aral, dadalihin ng NTFP Task Force ang mga nakalap na aral sa mga ahensiya ng pamunuan at NGO upang magamit sa pangkalahatang pagpapaunlad ng non-timber forest products sa ating bansa.

SHARING THE RATTAN GARDEN SYSTEM

Building on exchange through popular learning tools

Last September 1999, indigenous Tagbanua representatives of Palawan, Philippines made a visit to East Kalimantan, Indonesia. Their mission was to learn more about the kebun rotan or rattan garden system; an indigenous palm-rice fallow management system practised by the Dayak Benuaq of the District of Kutai. This visit was motivated by the recognition of the disappearing rattan resource in the Philippines and an interest in regenerating this important Non-timber forest product (NTFP) for the indigenous peoples of Palawan. The trip was made possible by the Non-Timber Forest Product -Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP) through the assistance of partner groups in East Kalimantan such as PLASMA, Institute for Environment and People Empowerment, and SHK Kaltim-Community Forest Management - East Kalimantan with Cornell University providing a facilitative role in the activity.

The participants on the visit discovered that rattan planted in rice fallows performed very well especially for the species *Calamus caesius* or sega as it is better known in Indonesian. This encouraged Palawan participants to share the rattan planting technique to several groups in Southern Palawan. These groups tested the system by planting rattan in their agricultural fields after an orientation session in October.

In December of the same year, NATRIPAL, United Tribes of Palawan, the local host organizations of many indigneous communities in the province, organized a national conference on Non-timber forest Product development. This was another venue where the system was shared and where great interest was drawn from indigenous Mangyan (Mindoro) , Agta (Cagayan Valley) and Dumagat (Quezon) participants along with Palawan delegates.

From these initial exchanges bloomed the idea of a longer term and more far reaching intervention. Given the aforementioned decline of the rattan resource in the Philippines and a future threat to depleted rattan areas outside East Kalimantan, the traditional rattan planting system presented a model for small holders in both countries.

The idea of an applied rattan garden manual was then launched. NTFP-EP, SHK and former Cornell graduate student, Crissy Guerrero (now the Regional Support Coordinator for the NTFP-EP) began conceptualizing the idea in August 2000.



The media tool would serve the following purposes:

1. To provide an instructional booklet on rattan regeneration

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- techniques and fallow management for Indonesian and Filipino farmers
2. To prepare an informational manual on rattan regeneration for field workers in the Philippines and other countries where English is also widely spoken

The booklet and manual are being produced by SDM, Studio Driya Media, a development communication group working out of Bandung, in cooperation with SHK and other Kalimantan base NGOs. The booklets for farmers in Indonesian and Tagalog is being funded by Cornell University whereas the larger English manual is being funded by the NTFP-EP.

The manual and booklet are to be field tested in Indonesia and the Philippines by late 2000 and should be ready for printing by April 2001.

Though this manual is also part of the Cornell fallow management initiative, this is also a major part of the NTFP-EP program that is working with grass roots organizations to help develop NTFPs for improved livelihoods of forest dependent communities. It is hoped that the manual can begin to bring awareness and action in the regeneration of important rattan species and Non-timber forest products in general.

*By: Ma. Cristina S. Guerrero
NTFP-EP / Task Force*

INITIAL PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR 2001

January	Reviewing the strategy for UMP Handicrafts
February	22-25 (tentative) Task Force meeting (Imugan, Nueva Vizcaya, host -KEF)
March	20-23 (tentative) Land Tenure and Rights to Resource Extraction: Opportunities for NTFP Development: A National conference on the experiences of communities in utilizing tenurial instruments for effectively accessing NTFPs
April	Assistance of KEF to NATRIPAL in identification and development of fruit trees and fruit processing Launching Rattan planting booklet of the Dayak Benuaq (Indonesia) and dissemination to partners.
May	Receiving visitors from Indonesia on exposure trip on the Philippine NTFP Task Force and on Upland Marketing Program operations
June-July	Launching the NATRIPAL CADC / ADMP informational booklet
August	Task Force meeting (Bacolod, Negros Occidental, host-BIND), NTFP certification and labelling meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka

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National Non-timber Forest Products Conference in Bali, Indonesia

The national conference on Non-Timber Forest Products held in Bali, Indonesia last October 9-15, 2000 is one of the main activities initiated by the NTFP Exchange Programme for Asia.



Forty-one participants coming from different countries such as India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines attended the activity. Participants from the Philippines were Pastor Delbert Rice- Kalahan Educational Foundation, Mr. Rene Guarin- UNAC, Ma. Cristina S. Guerrero, Exchange Programme Secretariat and myself. The objectives of the conference were as follows. 1. To function as a catalyst for the discussion in Indonesia in relation to the enhancement of community based sustainable forest use and NTFP development; 2. To offer a platform for the exchange of experience and expertise between grassroots and support organizations in the region. Each organization presented for two days and this was followed by a field trip to handicraft producers and outlets. The last two days involved brainstorming and planning sessions. The first was for the national, Indonesian level and then the second for the regional level.

As an Indigenous person from the Philippines, I have many insights from the trip. For one, I was very impressed with the industriousness of the Balinese craftsmen. They really know how to maximize all materials even things that we may think have no use. From the many products that Indonesians are developing, processing and marketing, I also realized that there are larger opportunities we as Filipinos have yet to explore.



the discussions, it was highlighted that one of the difficulties

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Though it appears that the Philippines may be ahead of Indonesian NGOs in terms of organizational development and networking, definitely both Indonesia and the Philippines have their fair share of policy issues and government problems. In

experienced by the communities was the access and control over NTFP products utilization.

National planning sessions involved the establishment of a working group (and later a focal point) for the Indonesian group. This group would undertake initial research and exploration work. As agreed by the group, the priority activity for the program for the next year was to focus on strengthening of networks from the local to international level.

By: Dionesia O. Banua
Executive Director, NATRIPAL

The International Year of the Mountain (IYM) 2002: *Strengthening the multi-function approach*

Worldwide, forests ecosystems generally grow in fragile, highly elevated and rough mountainous terrain, coursing through steep slopes, thin soils, and harsh climates. They perform multifunction roles. Mountain watersheds supply fresh water to over half of humanity. They nurture many of the globe's richest biodiversity concentrations and provide important sources of valuable timber and other wood and non-timber forest products. Old forests and fully grown tree plantations sequester enormous amounts of carbon from the air through tree trunks and branches, as well as deep down the soil, where the carbon can stay for many centuries.

Mountain forests, especially moist tropical forests, have higher biodiversity per unit area than adjacent lowland forests, and endemism is frequently high. Forests provide timber, and together with other plants like shrubs provide non-timber forest products like fruits and seeds, vegetative structures, exudates like gums and resins, and wildlife for local communities.

But mountain forests are endangered more than ever before. The highest rate of deforestation in any biome run in tropical forests: 1.1 percent per year. Extractive industries such as mining and logging concessions, and land use conversions into monocrop plantations or pasturelands-all inflicted by outside interests of the upland communities-have stripped the mountains of their forest cover. Worsening the situation are impoverished but land-starved farmers who slash and burn old and secondary growth forests. All these factors combine to worsen the effects of global warming and acid rain.

The Philippines alone is one of the most endangered among the world's 17 "megadiversity" countries. The number of endangered species in the country increased from 212 in 1990 to 284 in 1998. Widespread destruction ensued as more and more outside interests converged on and disenfranchised forest-dependent communities of natural resource usufruct. Through Timber License Agreements (TLAs) and mining permits, big business has arrogated unto itself the near-exclusive resource use decision-making prerogative through their social-economic and political influence within and among the center of policy-makers in urban-based government bodies.

Conversely, for the forest-dependent communities to regain their natural resource management prerogatives, a broad-front, a multi-functional approach has to be adopted. Various stakeholders-from civil society to the national and local governments, academe, international development agencies, and certain business interests-have to band together and use their collective resources and influence to empower the local communities and build their capacities to sustainably manage their forest natural resources.

The lead agent for conserving mountain forest resources will thus be the local upland forest resource users, either tenured migrants or indigenous communities. Moreover, since the multi-function

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approach sees not only the trees in the forest but also intangibles as carbon sequestration, hydrological cycles for upstream and downstream users, food security, agroforestry and non-timber forest products. With the worsening decline in natural forest timber resources, professional foresters, as well as agriculturists and marketing experts have to help communities address upland food insecurity by developing diversified livelihood opportunities especially during the farming lean months by developing NTFP as stable sources of income. Community-based forest resource management will thus have to venture beyond mainstream forestry which tend to see trees (or more correctly, timber) but not the forests and the various components that form their ecosystem.

The multifunction approach at the international level is gearing toward a higher level. In November 1998, the UN General Assembly declared 2002 as the International Year of the Mountain. The move is a follow-up to Chapter 13 (Sustainable Mountain Development) of Agenda 21, providing a unique platform to reinforce the long-term process started at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The IYM seeks to raise public awareness and ensure adequate political, institutional and financial commitment to concrete action for sustainable mountain development, hopefully well beyond 2002. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been designated as the lead agency for the IYM, a role approved by the FAO Council in November 1998. In the UN Resolution, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and other organizations were requested to support FAO.

Realizing the significance of raising multi-functionality to a higher level, the NTFP Task Force is gearing up its activities toward IYM 2002. To raise public awareness, it will participate in E-forums, national and international conferences to provide best case practices as well as community-based problems in forest conservation at the community level in Asia. A series of preparatory and thematic WG-MFPC regional meetings linked to IYM preparations are being held in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Europe to refine the multi-function framework consultation: Mountain Forests, People and Communities. The activities have already started and will continue in 2001 and 2002, to come up with a sustainable mountain development agenda for 2002 and beyond. The European Observatory of Mountain Forests acts as the WG-MFPC secretariat and lead agency. The Asian initiatives are part of the global preparation of the Working Group-Mountain, Forests, Peoples. Communities (WG-MFPC). The NTFP Task Force and WG-MFPC member, the Broad Initiatives for Negros Development, Inc., will act as the lead agency together with other members of the Task Force. Its thematic campaign will focus "Food Security, Mountain Forests and Local Communities; Non-Timber Forest Products Development as a component of forest conservation, marketing and fair trade."

Several Asian initiatives have been identified. One activity is to facilitate visits to Pontianak, East Kalimantan and Jakarta to learn from YDT/Dian Niaga operations. YDT/Dian Niaga is a successful NGO-Business sector tie up that has experience in national and export marketing of NTFPs. An exposure trip to Forest Trade on the potential of certification process for NTFPs has also been identified. Finally, Dayak members of BRIMAS (Sarawak - East Malaysia) will visit the UMP and KEF to learn about forest regeneration and the link between NTFP income generation activities and cultural

preservation.

The Philippines and Southeast Asia have a rich store of best case practices that demonstrate multi-functionality. Experiences, which at first blush seemed so local, so parochial, so singular can have a universal significance and appeal when packaged within the multifunctional approach. How communities grapple with issues of food insecurity that translates to conflicts between agricultural and forest land use, how they use NTFPs to diversify their sources of income are just but few of the concrete myriad of alternatives under different conditions which national and international decision-makers can draw lessons from in formulating policies and programs in sustainable mountain development.

Much of these diverse and rich, multifunctional experiences have yet to be synthesized, written and presented to various national and global multi-media outlets. Rigorous studies must be presented to various world bodies such that this be the heart of the IYM preparations. With the lessons can come the agenda beyond 2002, and from where policies, directions, programs and financial resources will eventually emanate.

Through this process can we thus build our own path of sustainable mountain development, based on the foundation of concrete and workable experiences and specific answers to specific problems and situations.

By: Benedicto Q. Sanchez , Project Coordinator- BIND

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What is our goal?

Food for Thought from Delbert Rice of the Kalahan Educational Foundation

The NTFP network has been organized, as the name suggests, to promote the use of Non-Timber Forest Products, but is that really our goal? It is also possible to exploit non-timber forest products in such a way that the forest would be damaged or destroyed. Some people think that our goal is to protect trees or to protect timber, but that is not our goal as I understand it. The goal is to protect the forest and the forest is not just trees.



Trees are not a forest. Some people make a plantation or an orchard using a single species and say that they have done "reforestation." Nothing could be farther from the truth.

A forest is a conglomeration of inter-dependent species of plants and animals, many of them huge and others microscopic, which occupy an area together. The forest is more than the sum of its parts. There are several things which a forest accomplishes which cannot be done by anything else. They definitely cannot be done by the various forest species working separately. They are only done by a forest and that is why the forests must be protected.

The forests are the most effective instrument for RECHARGING THE AQUIFERS. These are the underground reservoirs of water which supply the springs and wells, streams and rivers of the nation. Without good forests, the aquifers will dry up. It has already started happening on Cebu island. If that happens elsewhere the nation will be in REAL trouble.

The forests contain an almost limitless RESERVOIR OF GENETIC MATERIAL. We do not yet even know how to use most of this reservoir but we know that it exists and we know that if it is lost, it can never, at any time, be recovered.

The forest is the only economically effective mechanism known for CARBON SEQUESTRATION. It is absolutely critical that something be done immediately to reduce the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere. Too much global warming has already taken place. Very recently a ship was able to actually sail all the way to the North Pole. This is the first time in recorded history that it could be done. That means that much of the huge reservoir of ice at the North Pole has melted.

It is obvious that the governments of the world do not have enough political will to slow down the production of carbon dioxide. Even if they had the political will, it admittedly would be very difficult to accomplish. We will probably not be able to stop or even slow the production of carbon dioxide but even if we were, it would take us many years to sequester the huge amount of carbon that is already in the atmosphere.

Somehow we must protect the forests. The NTFP Network believes that one way to do this is by helping forest dwellers make a

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good living from the forest itself by increasing the value of the various non-timber products. That is not the only way but it is certainly a good place to start.

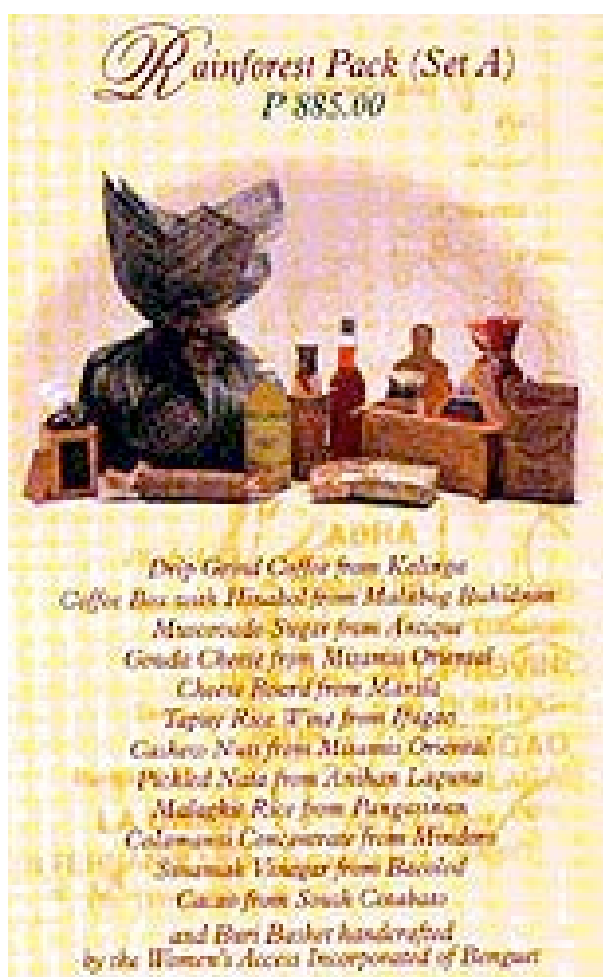
What are these NTFPs. Anything can be a product if someone wants to buy it. Sometimes, however, it is not a product until someone decides to process it so that it is saleable. That is the way it was with the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF). No one was interested in buying dagwey or dikay, indigenous fruits found in Imugan, until the KEF began processing them. In Indonesia no one wanted to buy old coconut shells until an enterprising group made them into good quality charcoal briquettes.

Some people have found a market for various types of resins which can be used for varnish, medicines or perfumes. Others, such as KEF have found a market for wild fruits after they have been turned into jams, jellies, marmalades, candies, juices, etc. Still others make a business of taking people for a hike through a forest. They call it Eco-tourism. The common denominator for them is that they can be harvested without damaging the forest.

It should not be forgotten, however, that once the trees get big enough so that they should be harvested, the trees could also become products, IF THEY ARE HARVESTED IN A WAY THAT THE FOREST IS NOT DAMAGED. We should not be in a hurry to do so. It is not yet time but we must continue to work with the goal clearly in focus and be ready to extend our imagination to embrace every possible means. The earth is requiring that we extend ourselves beyond the ordinary level of creativity in this emergency situation.

THE PASKO PACK

The Upland Marketing Program (UMP) of the Upland NGO Assistance Committee (UNAC) and the Philippine Business for Social Progress has been helping poor communities start or improve local livelihood through the Pasko Pack. These business initiatives range from processing of local fruits into jams, jellies, and juice drinks to crafting of forest products into decorative and useful houseware items. The UMP assists these communities develop their products using appropriate technology - processes that promote efficient use of local resources, discourage or eliminate the use of harmful technology, and blend with indigenous tradition. These ensure that products are of high quality and that the business exists in harmony with its environment.



The UMP also assists in marketing. The Pasko Pack items are products that UMP helped develop or existing products that need access to markets. Through the Pasko Pack, these products are purchased straight from the producers and sold directly to buyers. This lessens costs of marketing and allows the producers to get better economic returns for their products. After the Pasko Pack, some of the items will find their way to supermarket outlets and specialty shops and hopefully with your continued support and patronage, these items will survive and grow in the market.

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