



Go natural again!

BY GENEVIEVE JUROLAN-LABADAN, ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, NTFP-TASK FORCE

THE USE OF NATURAL DYE is re-gaining popularity among women weavers of the Higaonon indigenous community in Barangay Hagpa, Impasugong, Philippines. They are now beginning to use natural dye to stain *abaca* fibers, also known as Manila hemp, and weave them into colorful *hinabol* or traditional Higaonon woven cloth.

Higaonon ancestors used to stain their fabrics using dye extracted from roots, leaves and other parts of a dye source plant. However, through the years the use of natural dye became extinct when Higaonon people were introduced to synthetic dye in the 1950s. Eventually, they abandoned natural dyeing techniques and opted for the use of synthetic dye because it is practical to use, time-saving and synthetic dye produce brighter and more attractive colors.

In February 2006, training on natural dyeing was conducted to Higaonon women. Most of them disliked the idea of going back to natural dye because of the painstaking process involved. Thus, after the training, more than half of the trainees did not apply their learning. Only a handful of women from a minor Higaonon village of Tugunganon were genuinely enthusiastic about the newly-acquired skill in natural dyeing. They were excited to put to use their learning believing that the process would save them lots of money from using synthetic dye. Women would usually complain that they do not have money to buy synthetic dye. For them, natural dye is the answer to their problem.

Dye plants can be sourced out from their own back yards, farm lots or in the deep forests. Some of the dye plants are ornamental (*mayana*, *rose*, *salinggawa*), others are grasses (*cogon*), tubers (*yellow ginger*) and trees (*tungog*, *ilalama*, etc.).

After the training, the women were prompted to plant more of these dye sources. The propagation of dye sources has not only supplied them dye but also groomed their front yards because of growing ornamental dye plants close to their homes. *(continued on p. 3)*



Higaonon women see to it that fibers are uniformly immersed in the boiling water in preparation for dyeing INSET: Selling naturally dyed *hinabol* at the local market

Not By Timber Alone (NBTA) is a semi-annual newsletter of the Philippine Non-Timber Forest Products – Task Force (NTPF-TF), a collaborative network of NGOs and Peoples Organizations (POs) working with local communities on developing their NTFP-based livelihoods. The Task Force works on NTFP development in the context of sustainable forest management and community empowerment.

Looking back and moving Community-Based Forest Management forward

By ABI AGUILAR, POLICY ADVOCACY OFFICER, NTFP-TASK FORCE

I thought it was going to be a tough job. And it is. I have been involved in different environmental issues before and dealt with indigenous peoples' (IP) issues along the way. But this is the first time I got directly involved with Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) work and I consider engaging in it a welcome surprise. I have been a staunch anti-large scale mining campaigner for years and continue to be so. This is technically a different job, and yet it felt the same – working for a cause with like-minded support groups and towards achieving better policies that would positively affect communities. Even so, I know I am still learning and I hope you will learn with me as well.

CBFM 101

For more than a decade, CBFM has been implemented as a national strategy for forest management and 2007 is crucial because direct players of CBFM are assessing its gains and failures and now is also the year to craft a new strategic plan for 2008-2018.

The CBFM was adopted by the Philippine government as the national strategy for forest management in 1995 through Executive Order 263. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is mandated to implement the CBFM Strategic Action Plan which was adopted in 1997.

CBFM is viewed as a way to democratize forestland management and to address social and economic growth within the framework of social justice. Perhaps its most important component is the forest management by communities where People's Organizations (POs) are considered to represent communities in the whole frame of CBFM. Non-government organization (NGOs), local government units (LGUs) and academic institutions have also used CBFM in their undertakings, but in a lesser degree of implementation than DENR.

What now?

After 10 years of implementing CBFMS, DENR, NGOs, POs and LGUs have numerous experiences to share.

Every player had its own story, positive and negative experiences in terms of strategic and practical concerns of people and organizations. These experiences were what brought them all together in the aim of moving CBFM forward, despite factors that led to a diminished level of confidence and unmet expectations. Looking at it intently, each stakeholder recognized how important it is for everyone involved to bring together thoughts, learn from each other and re-establish partnership to move CBFM to greater heights. In the end, this has become the common denominator and a shared agenda by every key player.

The Strategic Plan

On September 20-22, 2006, a national workshop on strategic planning for CBFM was conducted. However, it lacked the participation of POs, NGOs and LGUs. It did not have the local touch and therefore, strategies and activities presented did not have as much weight as it would if local communities and implementors were there. Output from the communities is es-

sential as they are the ones who for a decade, have seen and experienced the impact of CBFM and they are the ones from which real stories and learnings can be found.

Meanwhile, NGO CBFM support groups have recognized that there is a need for a more effective implementation of CBFM in the next ten years. This means not just the DENR working for the national strategic plan but deeper involvement and corresponding efforts from the POs who can be mobilized by NGOs, LGUs and other identified partners in community forestry. Therefore, there is a need to be part of the whole process to ensure the participation of each stakeholder. This will definitely mean more than a year of work, but something has to be done where every stakeholder, individual or organization can take part in institutionalizing a systematic, sustained and mutually supportive collaboration. Credit should be given to the NGO CBFM support groups who have selflessly toiled to achieve the objectives. They are Women's Initiatives for Society, Culture, and Environment (WISE), Inc., Philippine Federation for Environmental Concern (PFEC), Upland NGO Assistance Committee (UNAC), International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), and Non-Timber Forest Products Task Force (NTFP-TF).

A more participatory approach was thus developed after NGO CBFM groups recognized the need for it. A series of five workshop-consultations was conducted from January to March 2007 in five strategic areas covering regions with CBFM areas. These were Baguio City (January 29- February 1), Bacolod City (February 6-9), Cagayan de Oro City (February 19-22), Davao City (February 25-28) and Los Baños, Laguna (March 11-14). A total of 116 POs, 52 LGUs, 48 NGOs and 87 DENR participants nationwide have joined in these workshop-consultations.

Said workshops were conducted to enable the participation of the different stakeholders from the respective regions and more importantly, to gather more substantial output and enhance the output of the first workshop in September 2006. Moreover, strategies in these workshops can easily be translated into activities at the local levels.

During the workshops, POs and support groups composed of DENR, LGUs and NGOs were asked to identify positive and negative results that they perceived were brought about and shaped by CBFM during the past years. They were asked to look into the different components of CBFM and identify the facilitating and hindering factors that led to the results they named. Some of the components analyzed included those in the preparatory stage: information, education and communication, community-based forest management agreement (CBFMA) processing, boundary delineation of CBFM sites, PO formation and organizing, and application/processing/approval of CBFMA. Planning stage components included the preparation/affirmation of the CRMF and the five-year work plan. In the implementation stage, participants were also asked to provide views on the following components: forest development/management, harvesting, processing and transport of forest products, forest protection/conservation, livelihood and enterprise development, policy and institution support, PO

strengthening and networking and linking. However, some site-specific components arose such as mining within CBFM areas and the conflict and overlap between CBFM and CADC/CADT (Certificate of Ancestral Domain Certificate/Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title) areas of IPs. They were also asked to make their recommendations for the improvement of each component.

In another session, POs and support groups were able to identify goals, objectives and strategies in the following major concerns in CBFM that need partnership: (1) tenure and resource use, (2) forest-based livelihood and enterprise, (3) forest management, conservation and protection, (4) PO strengthening towards self-governance, (5) policy and institutional support, and (6) monitoring and evaluation. They also named the resources they would need in achieving the objectives and conducting the activities they identified.

Lastly, POs and support groups working in the same regions were grouped together to identify their working mechanisms and the roles of each sector in moving CBFM forward in their respective areas.

Results of each session were presented in a plenary where everyone had the chance to deliberate the outputs and clarify on things that may be questionable or arguable. This proved to be tedious, but in the end, was able to settle differences, gain insights and discuss individual experiences in a deeper level.

Moving Forward

Many initiatives have been done and people ask what's next for CBFM and would it be different in the next ten years? After the 2008-2018 strategic plan is done, a National Confirmation will be conducted in June 2007 and simultaneous Regional Action Planning Workshops in July or August 2007 to again enjoin the participation of the POs, NGOs and LGUs.

With the new strategic plan crafted, everybody is hopeful. The hope for CBFM is on the ground. Communities and CBFMS supporters are positive and still believe in CBFM as the strategy to effectively manage forests.

Learning from CBFM

Each sector in the workshops has evidently learned much from the other participants. I, for one, learned so much.

As the workshops unfolded and were wrapped-up, as the start of the writing process and analysis began, thoughts would still come into my mind. This is not going to be easy. To be given a task to give a hand in consolidating, analyzing and writing concrete experiences of communities and peoples working for CBFM for more than a decade and making it their life is not easy. I tried to be as objective as possible and tried to disengage my sympathetic "community" self in the process, but just write and give justice to their inputs. I knew I had to somehow be their voice and that alone is no easy feat.

In past experiences, facilitating a workshop is a crucial job and I feel good when the output is substantial and I get what I need. To do secretariat job and assist to the minute and sometimes, complicated needs of participants are also satisfying. But being there in the workshops and not just facilitating, listening to their thoughts, desperations, joys, frustrations and what-have-you's was different. Gratifying would be an understatement to describe how I felt being there. It was fulfilling to know their thoughts and feelings and more importantly, the optimism they have to improve their communities, protect and sustainably manage the forests despite years of frustration and disappointments is contagious.

Working on raw data and towards the completion of a new CBFM strategic plan was a tough job. It meant months of blood, sweat (literally) and tears. It meant working overtime and even weekends, with deadlines and endless meetings and editions that come with it. But it was more than okay. The experience learning with the community I heard stories from, getting to know real people from DENR when before I thought differently of them and working with the NGO consortium working group was an eye-opener.

I am no expert on CBFM and I know I will continue to be learning it the way I am always trying to learn from everything I do. The way I am doing now.

I still think it is tough and complicated. But surprisingly, I am enjoying it. **nbta**

*Thanks to Women's Initiative for Society, Culture, and Environment (WISE) Inc. for the background material on CBFM.

Continued from page 1

Going back to natural dye also promoted biological diversity. *Ilalama*, a tree dye source, is found to be getting scant in population in Barangay Hagpa. Presently, women from the village of Tugunganon are propagating this species so they can have a continuous source of orange to brown dye color.

The use of natural dye also promoted forest conservation and protection since Higaonon are prompted to take care of the forest that give them *tungog*, a source of orange hues. *Tungog* is a tree that thrives only in a diverse forest ecosystem.

Higaonon women are more encouraged to use natural dye when they found out that naturally dyed woven cloths fetch higher prices than its synthetic counterpart. Naturally dyed products are in fact presently in-demand in the Northern market.

Not only does it benefit them economically but the use of natural dye also revived an extinct Higaonon technology, though the present process is more advanced and requires other skills such as weighing, measuring and computing. The benefit of natural dye does not end here. It also promotes safety and well-being of Higaonon weavers because natural dye is carcinogen-free unlike the synthetic dye which is in fact nationally banned for retailing.

The only negative thing about natural dye is that the process is painstaking, tedious, and time-consuming. It is like making brewed coffee as against the instant three-in-1 coffee drink. But the benefits of natural dye are significantly greater than using synthetic one.

Recently this year 2007, Higaonon weavers went to the opposite part of Mindanao Island, in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato to join T'boli indigenous weavers to train further on natural dyeing process. This is to advance their initial knowledge on the dyeing technique and a strategy of NTFP-TF to eventually professionalize the use of natural dye among Higaonon women.

Now, others are beginning to follow suit. Other Higaonon weavers from neighboring communities are encouraged to use natural dye for all its worth.

Higaonon women are locally given the moniker, "weavers of peace" because of the peace-promoting Higaonon tradition and meaning that their hinabol evoke. Hinabol, the woven abaca cloth, is indispensable item in resolving conflicts, traditional gatherings, weddings and rituals for the Higaonon people. Now, with natural dye as an ace under their sleeves, their way is paved towards true peace what with the beautified homes, protected forest, augmented income and cancer-free livelihood. **nbta**

Armed conflict & sustainable mountain development

BY BENEDICTO Q SÁNCHEZ, PROGRAM COORDINATOR, BIND

Victims

WHAT'S IN COMMON with the Broad Initiatives for Negros Development (BIND), AlterTrade Corporation (ATC), and the Metro-Bacolod Chamber of Commerce (MBCCI)? The obvious answer is that they're all based in Negros Occidental.

But the not-so-obvious commonality is that all have been victimized by the armed conflicts between the government and armed rebels in the Northern Negros Forest Reserve. Armed goons of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade has twice confronted and threatened this writer. The second time, they warned me at gunpoint not to step foot on their so-called controlled areas, or else suffer the consequences of an unnamed punishment. Not even the efforts of former Provincial Board Member and NTFP-TF Enterprise Development Officer Mardi Mapa could soothe their collective tantrums.

The site has seen its share of armed violence. The sitio was renamed Melancholy to commemorate a family massacred by the military in the 1990s. The village is also one of the most ecologically degraded in Negros Occidental, a place where oceans of cogon (*Imperata cylindrica*) teem.

Twenty years ago, the then DECS instituted an adult continuing education program, which trained scores

of skillful women weavers in Villacin to use cogon for various crafts, among them placemats. Their number tapered off when their finished products failed to find a steady market.

The BIND-NTFP-TF meeting then was to tap the weavers' expertise for an export project to Crate and Barrel, a US-based chain of stores. The weavers' expertise can pass the company's stringent product quality standards, which boasts that it rejects many prototypes until "every curve of a chair, every stem on a goblet, every weave" is just how it wants it.

On the other hand, ATC had to contend with challenges posed by rebel groups. First was the 1999 RPA-ABB taxation demand. Not to be left behind, the RPA-ABB's arch-nemesis, the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army tried to extort tax payments on May 2001. After a five year hiatus, NPA guerillas struck, burning one of ATC's trucks in Toboso, Negros Occidental on August 2006. Afterwards, Frank Fernández, CPP Komite Rehiyunal-Negros Secretary issued an online death threat on ATC leaders.

ATC stemmed from a development program that traced its roots from the 1980s Negrense sugar crisis. It was organized as a response to Bishop Antonio Fortich's call for aid in behalf of the Negros people who were stricken by severe hunger and unemployment. Eventu-



ally, it evolved into a people-to-people trading system that sustains the self-reliance of farmworkers' on organic agriculture.

On its part, MBCCI's planter members had to contend with rebel taxation since the 1980s. Those who refused to comply suddenly found their sugarcane fields or tractors burned. Some even paid for their reluctance with their lives.

To address the situation, the victim organizations banded together into the Peace Watch. Joining them in the network are peace organizations Pax Christi and Paghiliusa para sa Paghidaet (Unity for Peace).

A global phenomenon

Mountain ecosystems are the source of fresh water for more than half of humanity and contain a rich and unique variety of plant and animal life. However, crippling poverty among mountain people and armed conflicts played out on mountain terrain put these irreplaceable global assets at risk. Armed conflicts in the Negrense mountains is a but a reflection of the global trend.

"Mountain areas are home to most of the armed conflicts in the world as well as many of the world's poorest and least food-secure populations," says FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf during the 2002 observance of the International Year of the Mountains. He described the conflict in mountains as probably "the single greatest obstacle" to achieving the UN's goals of reducing poverty and environmental degradation. "Without peace, we cannot reduce poverty. Without peace, we cannot ensure secure food supplies. Without peace, we cannot even consider sustainable development."

Many mountain people are among the poorest, hungriest citizens of the world. They face massive barriers to development—rugged terrain, poor communications and transportation systems, political marginalization and limited access to education and capital. Many of the almost 800 million undernourished people in the world live in mountains. All fodder for recruitment of hungry poor peasants into the fold of armed rebel forces, and their rugged terrains, the perfect and arena for guerilla warfare.

Photo left: On the road to Sitio Melancholy, so named after a massacre in the 1990s

Inset this page: Kids help out with transporting cogon placemats

Indeed, one thing that Maoists and al Qaeda jihadists have in common is their recognition of the signal role of mountains in their armed struggle. For the Maoists, it means arousing the peasant

masses and initiating the armed struggle in the mountainous countryside where the "reactionary state power" is weakest, as to be almost non-existent. For them, it means building up armed guerilla forces step-by-step for a protracted people's war, and create revolutionary base areas, from which the armed guerillas can surround the cities from the countryside.

Armed conflicts have emerged as serious threats to mountain ecosystems and their inhabitants with 23 of the 27 major, armed conflicts in the world in the year 1999 being fought in mountain regions. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Asia was the theater of 9 of the 25 major, armed conflicts that took place across the world in 2000.

The UN's Food and Agricultural Organization notes that sustainable mountain development should identify and promote niches for mountain products and services such as specialized farm produce, environment and people-friendly models for hydroelectricity generation and tourism promotion, non-timber forest products, which include handicrafts like

the cogon placemat.

A primary aim is to integrate mountain and lowland economies. However, realistic and market-based prices must be ensured for mountain resources and produce. It is also important to promote local value addition to primary produce of mountain regions, improve post-harvest systems particularly storage systems for traditional crops, and provide basic physical and social infrastructure. The economic, environmental and social costs of externally driven resource extraction in the mountains must be accounted for.

For BIND specifically, this means adopting precisely these projects as basis for its sustainable mountain development programs, while closely linking them with concerns for peace and human rights accountability of both state and non-state actors on ensuring sustainable development. Its future programs will project these features more prominently.

The government, on the other hand, must ensure its non-military presence in the hinterlands, investing in social development to reap peace dividends in strife-torn communities. They must bat for the establishment of zones of peace, where communities steadfastly bar armed combatants from encroaching inside these areas. Only communities who have gained development stakes can find the courage to defend their homes and livelihoods from these armed intruders. *Please email comments to bqsanc@yahoo.com nbtta*



Mangyan Women on the Road to Empowerment

BY ANABELLE DECENA, CUSTOMMADE CRAFTS CENTER

I STARTED THE DAY early on January 21. I was told that it would take me almost a day to travel from Manila to a Mangyan community that I'd be visiting in the Southern side of Mindoro. Travel beyond 3:00 pm would be quite frightening because there are wicked people waiting to devour helpless victims and leave them behind half dead. Well, quite a bit scary!

The next day, Rex and I started early and it took us until 3:00 pm to reach Amaga, stopping only to eat lunch and buy some viand in the town of Mansalay. We took a tricycle (with no roof) to Amaga. It was a rocky ride as we were passing not on asphalt road, but on the riverbed (without water!). The situation is quite alarming! I was wondering when the situation started and whether the people living in the area knew the reasons why the river had dried up. I also wondered whether they had something to do with the drying up of the river. Coming from a forestry background, I knew the reasons why the situation occurred, judging from the presence or absence of trees in the area...that supposedly function to conserve water underneath the soil. But I kept mum on the subject, it was not the reason why I was in the area, but it is noteworthy to mention anyway. Hopefully, NTFP can address this situation in the future.

The meeting with Mangyan women the next day started a bit late, around 10:00 in the morning. We had to wait for other women coming from other areas. The women of Amaga had to prepare food and other necessary things

(i.e., water, firewood) for the family first before going to the meeting. This is a day-to-day occurrence. They cannot start other activity unless everything is ready for the family (or the husbands will be annoyed).

The meeting went on while some of us are taking out *kadios* beans from its pod. I learned it will be our viand for lunch. I discovered later it was indeed a savory *kadios* and it's a Mangyan specialty! There's also a pot of *kamote* boiling, it's our breakfast. In no time at all the *kamote* is ready to eat.

I was showed the step-by-step process of weaving the *ramit*, the Mangyan's traditional textile. Traditionally, it is used as *saya* by the ladies. With the intervention of NTFP-EP through its marketing arm CMCC, it is now converted into various functional items which make it more saleable because it is rather inexpensive compared to other natural textiles. The women showed that in spite of their busy schedule everyday, they can juggle weaving and taking care of the children and family because the former showed promise that it can augment their income and thus help in the family's expenses. They were happy by the "news" I brought that the colored non-traditional *ramit* designs are more saleable compared to traditional ones with traditional blue and white color. They said, at least now they can focus weaving colored ones which will earn a bit higher. The meeting ended with my choice of color and designs which are really nice which I told them we would prefer to have every time we order. (Well, I hope the women will always keep this in mind!)

My visit to the area is generally beneficial both on my part and the community. On my part, I have learned and observed their ways which I can share with clients. I become an instrument with which other people who don't know about them will hear and appreciate what they're doing. The community also has known that NTFP-EP is doing its best to advance its objectives and reached its goals. I leave the place happy that I've been privilege to visit them and somehow felt this feeling of confidence that they are well in the road to empowerment. *nbta*

Break-even awareness for communities

by Sharon Padilla, Finance Officer

BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS is a technique widely used by production management and management accountants. It is based on categorizing production costs between those which are "variable" (costs that change when the production output changes) and those that are "fixed" (costs not directly related to the volume of production). "Break-even Awareness" will help the entrepreneur in finding out if his business is growing or not. Training Programs about Basic Accounting and Cash Flow Management can be conducted in order to achieve this goal. With these tools, we can easily determine if the invested money is being used wisely and likewise evaluate if the business is getting profitable or going bankrupt. It is very important to learn how to identify your break-even point – the point at which the income from sale of a product or service equals the invested costs, resulting in neither profit nor loss; the stage at which income equals expenditure.

As part of our commitment in helping our partner organizations nationwide, I recently conducted a training at FVCTLDC Office in Sayre Highway Casisang, Malaybalay City, in order to enhance the skills of the trainees in financial management. The said training was attended by participants from Kalandang, the weavers of Mintapod, and staff members from FVCTLDC. Several examples of breakeven computations, based on actual business operations, were provided to give them a realistic view of the break-even situations and how to analyze the scenario using the accounting principles that were discussed in the training. The newly acquired knowledge will guide the trainees in determining the cost of production and the proper pricing of products. Also, this will help them in making business plans and carrying out project developments in the future. *nbta*





THE IP FOREST CORRIDOR PROJECT

Connecting Forests, Bridging People

BY ERIKA M. REY, ANTHROWATCH

TODAY'S ENVIRONMENTAL and indigenous peoples' (IP) situation in the Philippines conjures images reminiscent of an apocalypse – the massive and grinding poverty; the granting of mining and logging concessions all over the country, many of which are in IP territories; and the displacement of the IPs from their ancestral domains which ensues thereafter.

Despite having been considered as one of the 17 megadiversity countries in the world, the country has reportedly lost more than 93% of its original forest cover in the last 500 years. In another ironic twist, the IPs who have coexisted with the forests since time immemorial, remain to be one of the poorest and the most marginalized groups in our society. Apart from that, the IP's tenurial security and control over their ancestral domains as well as the resources found within have been put in grave danger with the influx of mining and logging businesses, as well as other "development" projects.

With this in mind, four NGOs, conceptualized a three-year collaborative project entitled, "Building Forest Corridors through Sustainable Ancestral Domain Management" (IP Forest Corridor Project) Collectively known as the Ancestral Domain Working Group (ADWG), it is composed of Anthropology Watch Inc. (Anthrowatch), Foundation for Philippine Environment (FPE), Non-Timber Forest Products – Exchange Programme (NTFP – EP) and Upholding Life and Nature, Inc. (ULAN). The IP Forest Corridor Project was launched in January 2007 after it obtained funding support from the European Union under the Programme

on Tropical Forests and other Forests in Developing Countries.

The project aims to promote forest conservation through sustainable and effectively-managed ancestral domain corridors. It targets five forest corridors: Inundungan Corridor (Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro), Victoria/Anepahan Corridor (Aborlan and Narra in Palawan), Mt. Mantalingahan Corridor (Brooke's Point, Palawan), Pulangi/Central Mindanao Corridor (Bukidnon, North Cotabato and Gingoog City) and Mt. Pinukis (Lison Valley, Zamboanga del Sur). IP forest corridors in this sense may mean that zones are consolidated and secured in any form to gain some levels of influence and sustainability, such as in Palawan, or that a common forest zone of several ancestral domains is protected due to its cultural and ecological significance, such as in Lison Valley. The project hopes that bridging forests would contribute to more unified actions by IPs in conservation and sustainable development and would produce interconnected ecosystems thus optimizing the allocation of resources in a wide range of areas.

It has five components: 1) Tenurial Security and Community Development Planning; 2) Forest Restoration and Conservation; 3) Capacity Building for Legal Defense and Community-Based Law Enforcement; 4) Enterprise Development; and 5) Promotion of Model Collaborative Community Implementation. It stands to benefit IP groups in nine project sites, namely: the Buhid Mangyan in Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro; the Tagbanua in Apurawan, Aborlan and Brgy. Dumanguena in Narra, Palawan; the Pala'wan in Brooke's Point, Palawan;

Yamie Deig and Guillermo "Donoy" Pao Jr., both Tagbanuas, present their Ancestral Domain's Stakeholder's Map which they made during the Palawan Project consultation held in March 13, 2007.

the Manobo in Arakan Valley, North Cotabato and Sinuda Kitaotao, Bukidnon; the Higaonon in Hagpa, Impasug-ong, Bukidnon and Bal-ason, Gingoog City; and the Subanen in Lison Valley, Pagadian City.

It is currently being implemented with Father Vincent Cullen Tulugan Learning Center (FVCTLC), Inter-peoples Exchange (IPEX), Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF) and the Nagkakaisang Tribo ng Palawan (NATRIPAL). This initial set of associate partners may further be expanded as needed in the future.

After a series of preparatory activities held from February-March 2007, activities are underway, such as the project planning workshops, training capacity building of forest guards, 3D mapping, the conduct of census and product appraisals.

As the project progresses, the ADWG hopes to contribute to the empowerment and capacity-building of IP communities in ancestral domain management and forest conservation. The ADWG hopes that this project can illustrate the gains of collaborative undertaking between different NGOs with different specializations, as well as the partnership between the ADWG and local IP organizations, in bringing about an integrated and holistic ancestral domain management. **nbtta**



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Advancing with a colony

BY ARLAN M. SANTOS, NTFP-TF

I AM NOT PERTAINING to any colonial armies but to a swarm of bees producing human's long time delicacy- honey! Our fundamental challenge in forest honey production is preserving its quality from harvest to packaging. But all we need to know we can learn from the bees!

First lesson: recognize the hive's compartments. The perennial problem of harvesting the whole hive and squeezing it not only destroys the colony but also deteriorates the honey quality. To avoid these destructive practices and complete annihilation of the bees, NATRIPAL (The United Tribes of Palawan) launched a missile campaign for systematic harvesting by retrieving only the honeycomb and leaving the other parts of the hive. The honeycomb is then believed to be reconstructed by the same bees to ensure next year's harvest.



TOP: Only the honeycomb part is harvested, leaving behind the other segments of their nest. This is done so that the bees can rebuild their hive and store honey which can be harvested for the next season. INSET: Newly harvested sealed honeycomb commands higher prices.

Second lesson: seal your food with a kiss.

Bees store their honey in comb and seal it; they probably use their mouth to seal the comb- thus protecting the honey, which is their food supply, from spoiling and ensuring its freshness. NATRIPAL has implemented the use of clean food grade plastic and buys only those honeycombs contained in such plastic. This was done to ensure the honey's pureness and to arrest fermentation. We managed to move forward with our campaign as more

and more honey harvesters followed this plastic system.

Third lesson: feed your allies. The only way to conserve the wild bee colony is to protect their forest habitat and plant more trees. This will provide an abundant source of

foraging grounds for the bees who in turn feed us with their honey.

Final mission: victory for all. This simply means that the dynamics and interrelationship of man-bee-nature is as important as the product. Colony rules! *npta*



Food grade plastics containing newly harvested honey with combs are delivered to NATRIPAL by the locals. Naturally sealed forest honey in combs suspended in processed honey (first three bottles, 2nd photo), raw cultured honey in the market sells at PHP500 (rightmost bottle, 2nd photo). Mr. Armando Sanyuan (Buhid Tribe, Mindoro), Mr. Karling Padilla (Tagbanua Tribe, Port Barton, Palawan), Mr. Aniw Lubag (Hanunuo Tribe, Mindoro) during the April 2007 study tour in honey processing lab of NATRIPAL.