



Dye Another Day...

BY NOLA ANDAYA
CRAFTS COORDINATOR, NTFP-TF

While this has nothing to do with the James Bond movie, you'll find this story on dye application training conducted by the NTFP-TF Team in three Higaonon communities in Bukidnon just as exciting! Especially since it is written by someone who's never had the privilege to ride a *habal-habal* (an average-sized motorcycle) in her life. And not to forget the fact that it was a two-hour drive along dirt roads and unceasing rain...

A bloody beginning...

The bloody beginning I am referring to here is the perennial color-bleeding problem of the exquisite *hinabol*, the traditional textile that the women of the Higaonon community weave using abaca fibers.

The *hinabol* is characterized by striking color combinations and vertical patterns that seem to go on and on. Its uses vary from the mundane, such as material for the *kamuyot* which is a sling bag or back pack used by both men and women of the community to carry their daily necessities – to the most sacred, as a peace offering during times of inter-community conflicts. Unfortunately, however delicate the design, the beauty of the *hinabol* wanes when exposed to perspiration, rain or water and the color starts to run.

This bleeding problem has become typical of the *hinabol* ever since the weavers started using synthetic dyes. The problem roots from the incorrect practice of dyeing that the women have come to adopt. Inaccessibility of required materials, misconceptions on functions of chemicals and some required steps, plus the lengthy procedures are some of their reasons for neglecting the proper process.

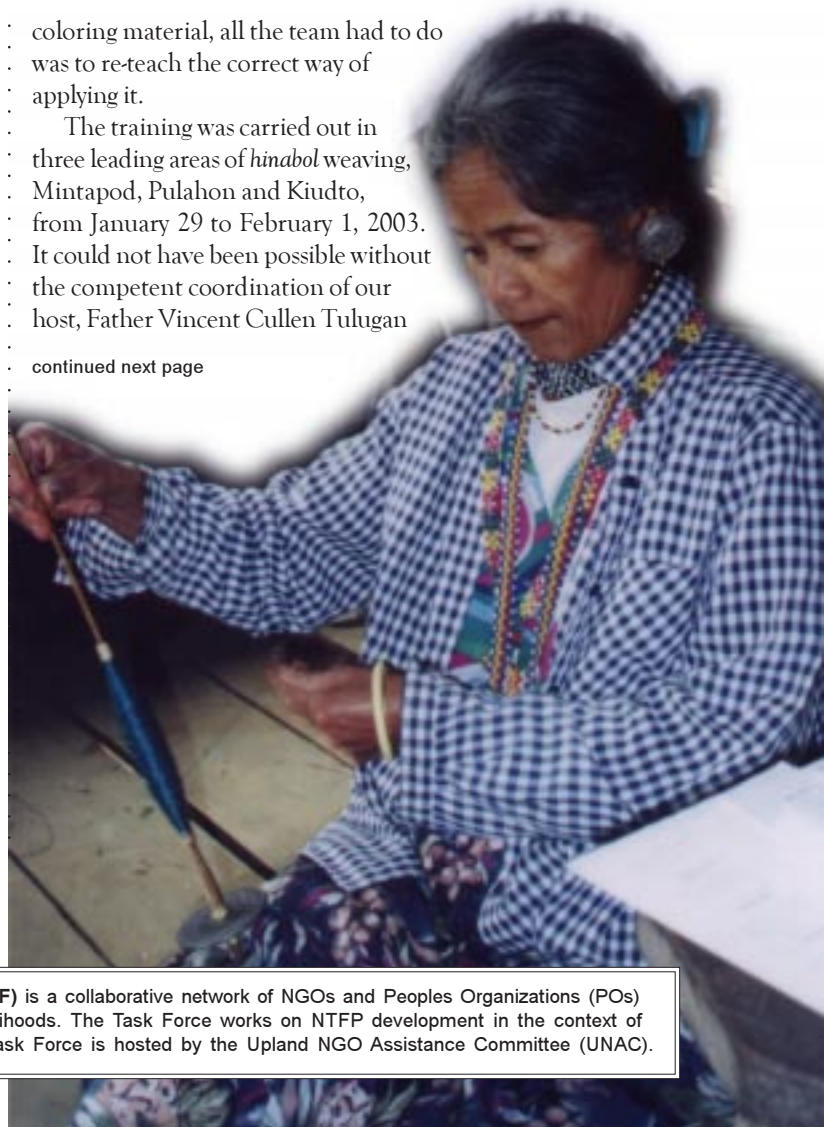
To dye for you

The goal: to improve handicraft-making skills as part of its project for sustainable production and innovative marketing of its partners' products. With this in mind, the team, together with product design expert/consultant, Met Sta. Maria, trekked to the mountains to conduct a refresher course on basic dyeing. Since the women were already using the commercially available

coloring material, all the team had to do was to re-teach the correct way of applying it.

The training was carried out in three leading areas of *hinabol* weaving, Mintapod, Pulahon and Kiudto, from January 29 to February 1, 2003. It could not have been possible without the competent coordination of our host, Father Vincent Cullen Tulugan

continued next page



The Philippine Non-Timber Forest Products – Task Force (NTFP-TF) is 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. The Task Force is hosted by the Upland NGO Assistance Committee (UNAC).

Learning and Development Center (FVCTLDC), as represented by Bong Geolina, the wonder-community organizer of FVCTLDC.

To facilitate standardization of the process, NTFP brought measuring equipment and poster guides were prepared for each community. A color quality test was prescribed for all subsequent *hinabols* to ensure that the process will strictly be followed.

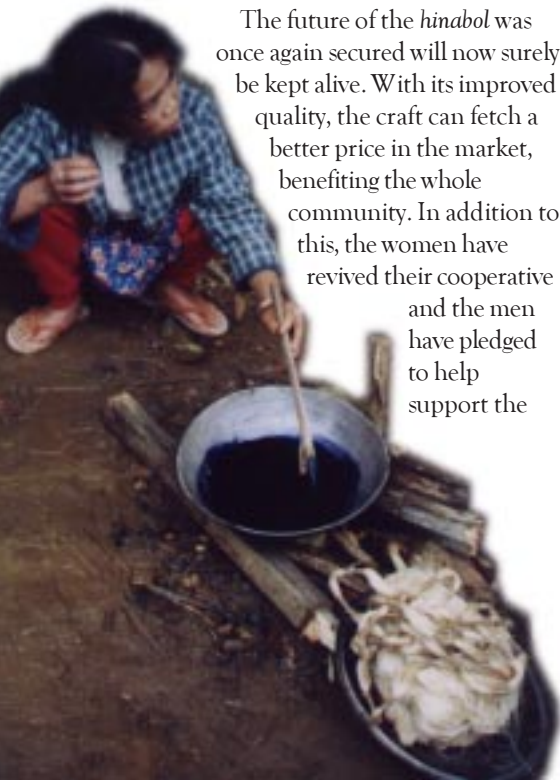
But learning was definitely not only one-sided. The NTFP staff were also given a special demonstration on the intricacies of the process of making a roll of *hinabol*. From the time the *lanot* (abaca fiber) is gathered by the men – entailing a lot of skill and strength – up to the artful weaving of a pattern that is especially sacred to the community.

The experience shed new meaning on the *hinabol* in the eyes of the team. What was then just a roll of woven natural fiber with vibrant colors is now a roll of woven stories, tradition, history even emotions of the Higaonon women who made them.

A good day to dye...

Indeed it was a good day to dye. The women gave the tedious and long process a chance. According to Inay, the head of the women weavers, the new dyeing process seemed closer to the olden ways of their ancestors.

The future of the *hinabol* was once again secured will now surely be kept alive. With its improved quality, the craft can fetch a better price in the market, benefiting the whole community. In addition to this, the women have revived their cooperative and the men have pledged to help support the



.. a roll of woven natural fiber ... is a roll of woven stories, tradition, and history ...

women in this endeavor. Thoughts of training younger weavers were also expressed and problems of capitalization were resolved internally and through the NTFP's Credit Fund.

Mission not so impossible....

Improved quality and more stable production eases the job of the NTFP Marketing Team to create a better niche for the *hinabol*. NTFP has already initiated applying the precious *hinabol* to functional items in its latest line of conference kit materials which can be ordered specially for seminars, conferences and corporate give-aways. We are looking towards making *hinabol* finds its niche alongside the *Tnalak*, an abaca-

based cloth, hand-woven and colored with natural dyes by the T'boli women of Lake Sebu.

With your support, the women will continue creating their prized possession and surely will dye another day.

For inquiries, email nola_andaya@yahoo.com or call 925-4772.



◀A weaver from Mintapod learns the proper way of preparing the dye for application.

▶The women of Pulahon present the modern *kamuyot* to Nola Andaya, NTFP-TF (left), and Met Sta. Maria, crafts consultant (center).

Taking Full Advantage of the Management Agreement

BY DELBERT RICE

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, THE KALAHAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Land tenure is the most critical issue for forest dwellers. In the Philippines there are two legal instruments that provide for land tenure. Indigenous Peoples can now get an Ancestral Domain Title or CADT for their tribal lands. While the process is slow, it is not impossible. Other forest dwellers can enter the Community Based Forest Management Program of the Government (CBFM). Both programs demonstrate the wisdom of the Philippine government to confront both the problems of human rights and environmental protection. They recognize, in principle, that forest dwellers can manage the environment and its resources effectively.

Both programs have stringent requirements. They are also not without defects. The most important requirement for both is the preparation of a **management plan**. In several cases, a small group of leaders just gets together and hurriedly makes a plan to fulfill bureaucratic requirements. Sometimes government workers present a finished plan to the community for their signature. In both these methods, there is little understanding in the community as to what the plan is all about and there is no intention to actually follow it.

A major failing of these programs is that while the people have "land" tenure, they do not yet have legal access to the resources. The government requires the community to hire specialists to inventory the resources, develop annual work plans and other detailed documentation, running the community as if it were a commercial firm. Some communities only want to cut a few trees from the forest for local use and sell a few hundred board feet of lumber to

balance the community budget. Wanting to do it legally, they instead are forced to cut and sell thousands of board feet of lumber in order to recoup the costs associated with all the paperwork government requires. This is self-defeating. The same problem is true for rattan and other Non-Timber Forest Products.

The Ikalahan have improved the planning process by going one step beyond the development of the Management Plan. This modified process has been accomplished within the Kalahan Reserve and is being continued in the remaining portions of the Ikalahan Ancestral Domain.

First, each of the 23 Barangays spends one or two days in an Ecology Seminar so that everyone understands how the natural systems of plants, animals, water, soil and air work together for sustainability. That gives them a view of the **ENVIRONMENT** or setting.

Next they spend a day or so reviewing their resources and evaluating the threats to their sustainability. Having done that, they can intelligently decide which resources to use and which ones to protect to provide for the sustainability of the environment as a whole. This answers the question of **WHAT**.

Then the community members, working together, can decide **WHERE** to do things. Where is the watershed? Where will be the production forest? Where will be the sanctuary for wildlife? Where will food production be done? That is the **LAND USE PLAN**. It usually takes another day or two to accomplish this.

A few weeks later, the community gets together again and decides **WHO** will

supervise things. **Who** will supervise the forest area? **WHO** will supervise the reforestation of the watershed? **WHO** will settle disputes regarding the use of resources? Will only one Barangay manage things or will several Barangays work together? **WHO** will handle the funds? **WHO** will audit the funds?

At the same time, they must decide **HOW** they will do it. **HOW** can they protect the wildlife and the watershed? Will there be a Board of Directors? **HOW** will they be elected? **HOW** can they harvest rattan sustainably? **HOW** will they harvest timber sustainably? **HOW** will they ensure the sustainability of all of their other resources? It is highly recommended that the community process their resources before selling them. They should not sell guavas, for instance. They should sell guava jelly. Don't sell lumber or rattan. Sell furniture or handicrafts. This ensures that the educated youth of the community will be able to return to the community and make a proper living.

If they hire one of their own educated members to manage things, **HOW** will he/she be supported? If their work is voluntary, **HOW** will it be organized? **HOW** will net profits be used? Will they be distributed to the members or will they be invested in programs for community benefit? **HOW** will they register their organization? Will it be a cooperative, a corporation, a Foundation, or will it be registered with the Bureau of Rural Workers as a People's Organization? All of these questions must be answered and the people must be involved in answering them.

The output of these meetings will be the **MANAGEMENT PLAN**. If several Barangays plan to work together for

Discovering Indonesian Adat

After endless queuing for birth certificates and passports until a full throttle ride along the Indonesian tarmac, the exchange visit was successfully concluded. Filipino participants were relieved from the 19-day adrenaline rush, and with a great sigh, were able to say, "We survived the trip!"

Seven representatives from Indigenous People and non-government organization members of the Non-Timber Forest Products- Task Force participated in the exchange visit. Funded by the VSO-SPARK programme, it was a window of opportunity for IPs and development workers alike to get a glimpse of the *adat* (meaning "indigenous") forest management systems in three Indonesian communities.

Refresher in Jakarta

The backpackers arrived in the City of Jakarta on 26 September 2002 after minor harassment from the Philippine Bureau of Immigration then being warmly welcomed by the people of Java-*Selamat Datang (welcome)*!

A bird's eyeview of the Indigenous People of Indonesia was imparted by Muayat Ali Mushni and Abdon

Nababan, national coordinator of KpSHK or the Consortium for Supporting Community-based Forest Management System and executive secretary of AMAN (Alliance of Indigenous Peoples in Indonesia), respectively.

In our sojourn to the Dian Niaga Eco-Traders headed by Johnny Utama, we learned how they have helped IP communities to establish viable enterprises, thereby promoting local development and forest conservation. The main challenge faced by Dian Niaga is to provide a direct link between the small community-based enterprises managed by the IPs and potential local and international markets. Showcased during the visit were various merchandise marketed abroad, such as ornamental charcoal, ecological briquettes, and NTFP handicrafts fashioned out of bamboo and rattans. The participants were heartened by the thought that exporting quality handicrafts could also possibly be accomplished by the IP communities in the Philippines.

A Peek at the Dayak

On our first leg of our journey, we were to witness the *Simpukng* system of the Dayak Benuaq Tribe. The group flew to the island of Borneo via Balikpapan- East Kalimantan. Ade Cahyat, Marketing and Promotion Manager of the Rattan and Crafts Farmers Association (RFA), briefed us on the *status quo* of the Indonesian rattan industry.

Pak Rudy Ignatius, field staff of SHK



dian niaga
handicrafts

and our study tour guide, welcomed us in Melak, West Kutai. We met with RFA members in Kota Damai. The night was spent in fruitful sharing, where both Filipinos and Indonesians alike gained insights on how IPs were granted recognition of their rights to ancestral domain and resources management. RFA explained that the alliance was set up to improve the rattan price through sustainable harvest, improved quality, sharing of market information, and marketing and promotion. The Filipinos likewise imparted their experiences in the recognition of the ancestral domain under the auspices of Indigenous Peoples Right Act Law.

We paid a visit to a Dayak Benuaq elder in Benung. The Dayaks are early known settlers in East Kalimantan. They typically dwell in a very long abode, called "*lou*," which houses all clan members. This was practiced so that the tribe could easily protect themselves against any unexpected enemy attacks. Interestingly, artistically carved totem poles symbolizing the spirit of their dead grace the front of the *lou*. To protect the family from diseases and any misfortune, food was offered to their ancestors during special ceremonies. Near the *lou* is the graveyard of their ancestors covered



with a relief of majestic ethnic designs.

We took a short tour to Tepulang to visit a *simpukng* farm. *Simpukng* is an old indigenous resource management practice of rattan cultivation in the secondary forest. This system is shown to be highly productive and ecologically sustainable. Medicinal and food crops are also integrated in this



cultivated land to enhance species diversification. This might explain Indonesia's 80% contribution of rattan production to the world market, with East Kalimantan as a major production area. The destruction of forests due to the proliferation of oil palm plantations, however, threatens this cultural practice.

That night, around 80 people comprised of elders, children, and local officials gathered in the communal hall to meet us. As was customary, the community women led an elegant chant, as well as songs and dances. Surprisingly, the Filipinos were also asked to pay tribute through their own native performances.

The group traveled back to Melak to pay a courtesy call at the *Bupati* or Mayor's Office. Then we left East Kalimantan. As we passed through the long, meandering Mahakam River, the astonishment which we felt on their *simpukng* and the 600 year-old lush intact culture will never be forgotten.

Penetrating Lore Lindu

Yayasan Tanah Merdeka (YTM) or the Foundation for the Freedom of Land, our host NGO in Palu, gave an orientation on the communities to be visited, issues on the Lore Lindu National Park, and the IP resource management and land-use system. Through rigorous effort

of the IPs with the help from YTM, three villages namely, Katu (1997), Doda (1999), and Toro (2000) were recognized by the Indonesian Government as residents in in the National Park.

In Toro, we stayed at the house of the village head where we met local officials, elders, and other community members. The villagers exhibited their NTFP handicrafts such wallets, vests, and bags finished out of native bark, rattan and *Pandanus sp.* We learned of their struggle for the recognition of ancestral land and the lack of policies supporting the IP sector. Filipino IPs shared similar instances and their endeavor in the IPRA setting.

The role of women was underscored in resources management. Traditionally, women had equal rights and a political role with men in decision-making. But because of changing repressive Indonesian policies, according to Rukmini who is the head of the women association, this arrangement was altered. It is only recently that women are being re-acknowledged as partners in decision-making. The women group is currently involved in planning and decision-making in the community's resource management project.

We next went to Rompo, hiking an hour to reach Katu village. The *Kepala Desa*, or local head welcomed us. We productively spent our time visiting the village farms. Swidden farming is predominantly practiced, thus preserving a traditional land-use system consisting of *pandulu hutan* (primary forest), *lopon tua hutan* (15-20 years old forest), *lopo hehe* (<15 years), *holu* (bush), and *ladang* (rice paddies). The community also designated forest guards to protect against encroachers. Prudent harvesting and selling of NTFP (i.e. rattan and resin) are well timed to favorable high market prices.

We generously shared and exchanged traditional practices, concluding the farewell night with a ritual of indigenous music and dances.

Climax in Repung

Our visit to Lampung was hosted by WATALA (friends of the earth), an

NGO assisting the people of Krui. They briefed the group on the history and the local situation in Krui, a highlight of which is the never-ending conflict between the government projects and IPs. This is perennially exemplified by the construction of the hydroelectric dam and the widespread conversion of ancestral lands to oil palm plantations, which were adamantly contested by the indigenous people and NGO.

Krui is popular for the traditional practice known as *repung*. This is an agroforestry system wherein a piece of land is cleared and planted to various crops like coffee, cloves, pepper, *dapdap*, cinnamon, and other fruit trees. After 15-20 years, trees dominate the ecosystem and it will become a *damar* forest garden. Various experts from the academe and other research organizations were enticed to study this ecologically sustainable practice.

Damar resin from the tree species of *Shorea javanica* is the main product of Krui. We experienced harvesting from a half-inch deep bored triangular cavity around the mature tree trunk where the resin dripped for 5-6 days. Collected resin is classified according to quality. First class resin is characteristically crystal



clear, while the lower quality is whitish and almost powder in form. The farmers usually sell their product to a nearby trader in the community.

The Krui people lamented that the recognition of usufruct rights through *Kaawasan Dengan Tujuan Istimewa* does not assure them of long-term security of tenure. Furthermore, they felt that, in order to progress; the government should promote agro-industrial based development by putting up a processing

BIND Undertakes Participatory Inventory on NTFPs

BY MARÍA THERESA BRUNIA AND BENEDICTO Q. SÁNCHEZ
BROAD INITIATIVES FOR NEGROS DEVELOPMENT (BIND)

The Broad Initiatives for Negros Development (BIND) held a participatory inventory training-workshop on non-timber forest products (NTFP) last 24-30 November 2002 at Brgy. Marcelo, Calatrava and Don Salvador Benedicto, Negros Occidental.

The participatory inventory aimed to help the Community Based Forest Management Agreement (CBFMA) holders determine the abundance, sustainability and marketability of some regulated timber forest products and NTFP species such as rattan, wild bamboo and orchids. Specifically, the inventory is used to estimate Annual Allowable Cut (ACC), or the optimum sustainable harvest of particular species. Generally, The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) requires a 5% sampling intensity in total operable or harvestable area.

An important feature of the

participatory inventory is that it is designed and planned with the active involvement of a people's organization with a CBFMA or Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim. The PO members make all the crucial decisions and are involved in every step of the inventory. A participatory inventory also takes into consideration indigenous knowledge systems combining it with scientific knowledge.

Mary Stockdale, a noted international NTFP inventory expert from Land and People Information Sharing (LAPIS), British Columbia, Canada, facilitated the training. The training was participated in by 15 *Bagong Silang Marcelo Katilingban sang Sustenidong Mangunguma* (BSMSKM) members- CBFMA holder, a DENR representative, five BIND staff members, a GPS/GIS consultant from the Negros Mapping Technology based in Bacolod City, and four representatives of NTFP-

Task Force.

BSMKSM with members from the municipalities of Salvador Benedicto and Calatrava was organized by BIND. It was through BIND's assistance, and consultation with DENR, that BSMKSM was able to craft its Community Resource Management Framework (CRMF), a plan required under the CBFMA. An important component of its management strategy is ensuring the sustainable utilization of NTFPs.

The workshop started with an expectation check. It was very interactive, with the facilitators asking questions and soliciting inputs from the participants. Participants from the PO, DENR, local government openly discussed and debated the quantity they could harvest annually, like rattan, to have a continuous and sustainable supply for cottage handicraft industries. The PO members realized the need to count the selected non-timber resource

july

august

sep-oct

the year that was

●●The 4th edition of the official NTFP-TF publication "*Not by Timber Alone*" was released. It featured articles on beekeeping, marketing, the international year of the mountain and a handbook on ancestral domain management planning.

●●In mid-July, the NTFP-TF along with *Bandillo ng Palawan*, conducted *consultations regarding mangrove depletion* and alternative livelihood possibilities. This was requested by SAMBILOG, the local Pala'wan / Molbog association covering four barangays in the southernmost tip of Palawan. A subsequent output was the formation of a composite team, including ELAC-Palawan which returned to SAMBILOG communities in September to discuss indigenous peoples rights and environmental laws. Since then, the NTFP-TF has joined Task Force Bugsok, a collaborative effort of NGOs and POs working to address land and water rights of the Palawan and Molbog.



●●The annual *NTFP-Exchange Programme (EP) regional meeting* was held in Ooty, Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India. The regional steering committee, composed of partners from Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, met with Dutch counterparts. Major highlights include: (1) inputs to the regional proposal upon completion of the 2nd phase of the EP and (2) the decision to move the regional EP office to the Philippines, with UNAC as the host agency.

●●The NTFP-TF, in cooperation with and through the support of Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO)-SPARK, organized the *Exchange visit* "Learning about Traditional Forest Management Systems of Indonesia." There were seven participants from the TF, namely representatives from Mangyan Mission, KPLN, NATRIPAL, FVCTLDC/AGMIHICU, BIND, and KEF. The Indonesian hosts were KP-SHK and AMAN (see complete article in this issue).



to enhance their livelihoods. Yet, the resource users complained of the severe DENR restriction on the harvest and sale of rattan, *paku-paku* and wild orchids, especially for the more lucrative urban markets.

Participants decided to focus on the wild bamboo *bocau*, *pako-pako* and 17 species of rattan locally known as *yaming*, *balintukan/pansilanon*, *manggaong*, *bulunganon*, *tagiti*, *tagkan*, *pagaw/sig-id*, *bugtongan*, *kalapi*, *amo-amo/silad*, *tamarong*, *luntok/minay-minay*, *puolos*, *tambunganga*, *mangnav*, *tagsa-on/manonton/malabagakay* and *saha-an*. The PO member and resource users prefer the species of wild bamboo *bocau* for various bamboo crafts.

The participants used the community sketch map to determine the distribution of NTFPs in the CBFMA site, which covers some 1,000.6 hectares of the Northern Negros Forest Reserve.

Much time was spent in discussing and debating harvesting experiences, with the objective of achieving a consensus on how to determine and count the varied growth forms of both juvenile and mature stages of a specific natural resource. In the case of rattan, it was agreed that the inventory should not count the generic “rattan,” as was the case during the 1996 Forest

Resources Inventory, but at the species level which is further subdivided into single stems and clumps. With *paku-paku*, participants specified that the inventory should count the *dalid*, the fibrous base of its rootstock using a meter of its growth as the yardstick — rather than the total length of the stock or its diameter at breast height (DBH) — for dividing the juvenile from a mature stock.

After a two-day discussion on the process, the group was split into two based on their knowledge and skills. Armed with camping gear and food supply, they proceeded to Bgy. Bagong Silang, Don Salvador Benedicto.

The next day, the teams moved into the forest. They had field sessions with Mary Stockdale on establishing and delineating the plot boundaries, on enumerating and measuring plants, and recording data.

Overall, the training provided much-needed hands-on experience and

interesting insights for the participants, especially community members, to undertake participatory inventory. Indeed it is a valuable tool for appreciation and preparation of management plans, a step towards realizing the full potential of Community-based Forest Management.



november

- The NTFP-TF organized its **semi-annual meeting** in Puerto Galera; the Mangyan Mission hosted this year's meeting. The TF was treated to a tour and orientation of two partners' offices and programs, namely the Mangyan Mission and KPLN. The meeting started with a review of plans vis-a-vis accomplishments. It also included brainstorming for a national forum, discussion of institutionalization and improvement of access to resources by local communities, an orientation on inventory training, forest services such as water and carbon sequestration, updates of the crafts program, VSO exchange visits and regional meetings, and monitoring and evaluation, among others.

- A training-workshop on **Participatory Inventory of NTFPs** was organized by BIND with trainer Mary C. Stockdale from Land and People Information Sharing (LAPIS), Victoria, BC, Canada. The participatory inventory was held from 24-30 November to aid the people of Marcelo and Bagong Silang, Negros Occidental in the planning for the community-based forest management program. The density and distribution of important NTFPs was mapped out,

and an inventory team was trained to undertake similar activities in the future. The TF secretariat, and partners from KPLN, MM and NATRIPAL also participated. According to BIND, a key element in the success of the workshop was the utilization and maximization of skills and talents from various stakeholders involved in the process (see complete article in this issue)

- The **handbook** entitled “*Delineating and Managing the Ancestral Domain*”, was released and distributed initially to Indian, Indonesian and Vietnamese partners (copies are available upon request at the NTFP-TF office.)

- NTFP-TF joined partners PAFID and Anthrowatch in the **GPS training** of NATRIPAL staff and community members. This was held in preparation for the long awaited **perimeter survey** of the **ancestral domain** of the Tagbanua of Bgy. Napsan and Simpucan, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. NATRIPAL will close the said survey in February 2003.



december

- This month, **Nola Andaya, joined the TF as the crafts coordinator**. Welcome Nola! The crafts program will now run full force under the guidance and supervision of the TF and UMFI and with the help of experienced consultants. The program will focus on the development of conference kit lines, niche marketing to government and non-government groups, and income impact monitoring, among other activities.

- We closed the year with a **honey hunting and beekeeping re-echo seminar** from 13 –17 December. UPLB bee experts were invited to assist NATRIPAL community members in teaching beekeeping techniques, proper hygiene in honey hunting and processing, and other products like beeswax. The UPLB also gave inputs for the development of its honey testing and processing facility. The TF is planning to prepare informational materials on proper honey harvesting techniques to be used by IP harvesters for this season.



“...participants realize the challenge in resources management of ancestral lands is maintaining and protecting indigenous knowledge systems and practices.”

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plant. They pointed out that selling semi-processed products would improve the market price of resin as well as support the local development of the industry.

The Federation of *Damar* Agroforest Gardens in Krui received an environmental recognition *Hari Lingkungan Hidup* award in 1997 as caretaker of the ecosystem.

Rekindling in Bogor

After the delighting journey, the participants together with AMAN, KpSHK, VSO-Jakarta went to Bogor to wrap up on lessons learned, the outcome of study tour, and some follow up activities.

There was a consensus of sorts among the participants with regards to their impressions on the communities visited and the lessons acquired in this study tour. First, intact cultural practices play a vital role in resources management and conservation. Traditional knowledge molded by time proves its harmonious relation with the natural resources. It is always assumed that these traditional practices are sustainable and have a low impact on the environment. Thus, the challenge in resources management of ancestral lands is maintaining and protecting indigenous knowledge systems and practices.

The second realization is that external support — provided by civil society such

as the NGOs, national and local government offices, academe, funding agencies and research organizations — generally inspires local communities to have a firm belief in themselves and in the self-sufficiency and autonomous community. While external assistance is commonly provided in the form of organizing, capability building, policy advocacy, marketing, infrastructure, laws and regulation, and resource mobilization, the tandem of the stakeholders cannot be stressed enough. Pragmatically, a multi-partite partnership is a crucial element in the achievement of rural development, conservation of resources, and securing ancestral domain.

Lastly, inter-cultural interactions provide a networking mechanism and assure a continuous flow of sharing of experiences. The diversity of indigenous communities results in varied experiences, thereby contributing to the skills, know-how, and community dynamics. Learning as a consequence from the experiences of other communities are valuable inputs and can be synthesized into models for gleaning insight, and even resolving the many indigenous community issues.

To Ched Mediodia, Tess Brunia, Ahop Agating, David Marcelo, Apol Tugas, and Benny Cumatang- *Terima kasih (thank you)!*

Taking full advantage ...

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efficiency they will probably want to do the basic work by Barangay then have a joint meeting to compile the different Barangay plans into a single coordinated plan for the larger area.

The final, and most important, step is for the community to draft a **MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT** among themselves and the government. The management plan will be attached to the Management Agreement, clearly showing to the government how the resources will be utilized sustainably. The attached management plan takes the place of paperwork required of commercial firms when they exploit public resources. The agreement covers a period of at least five years but preferably should extend to 10-25 years.

A small delegation from the community will then take the draft of the Management Agreement to the proper government agency, most probably the DENR, for signature. It is unlikely that the agency will approve it immediately. The officials will probably suggest changes and both sides will need to bargain. The government and the community will both benefit from the resulting improved agreement.

Once this Management Agreement is signed, it, in itself, is the permit or license to harvest and sell such forest resources as specified in the agreement. The community will probably be asked to submit occasional reports concerning such activities but that is not difficult to do. The government, in return, will issue the necessary “Certificate of Origin” whenever products are shipped to other areas.

The Management Agreement is seldom mentioned in government documents. While some local officials may not understand, it must be stressed that it has already been signed for several communities and is working for the benefit of those concerned.

It is true that all this planning take several days of meetings but this it is an important investment for the future of our grandchildren.



EDITORIAL BOARD

Maria Cristina S. Guerrero
Arlan M. Santos

CONTRIBUTORS:

Nola Andaya, NTFP-TF
Delbert Rice, KEF
Maria Theresa Brunia, BIND
Benedicto Q. Sanchez, BIND

CONTACT DETAILS:

c/o Upland NGO Assistance Committee
18 Marunong Street, Batangay Central,
Diliman, Quezon City 1100, Philippines
Telephone : 02 - 925 4772
Telefax : 02 - 436 0706
Website : <http://www.nfpp.org>