

SIANI Expert Group Discussion Series

Part 4: Wild Foods and Community-based Livelihoods

A transcript of the proceedings from the 22 September 2020, 3:30pm (GMT+8) discussion*¹



Background

The Expert Group Discussion Series on Wild Foods, Biodiversity and Livelihood is part of the activities of the SIANI Expert Group of the same name led by NTFP-EP Asia with support from SIANI, an open and inclusive network supporting multi-sectoral dialogue and action around the vision of SDG 2.

The Wild Foods, Biodiversity and Livelihood (WFBL) Expert Group works to consolidate the traditional ecological knowledge about wild foods in Asia and links these with relevant policy arenas on food security, poverty reduction and sustainable forest management.

The session on *Wild Foods and Biodiversity* is the 4th and final session in a four-part series of discussions on wild foods. The discussion is moderated by Femy Pinto, Expert Group Lead and NTFP-EP Asia's Executive Director. She is joined by Expert Group member Mathew John, Managing Director of Last Forest enterprise and co-founder Director of Keystone Foundation. Dr. Shiny Rehel and Mahadesha Basavegowda from Keystone Foundation also shared experiences from their work on the field with communities. NTFP-EP Asia's Senior Advisor for Strategic Programmes, Crissy Guerrero, together with Pak Lukas Atung and Pak Nico from the Punan Adiu village in Malinau also shared experiences from Indonesia. Desi Christiani from Krayan Highlands in Indonesia also shared about their work.

¹ *Disclaimer: This transcript is not a full verbatim transcript of the session and is based upon the recording and translation notes of the attendee/participant and video observer/documenter. The recommendations and discussions in this document are not yet formally developed, but will be developed further in this initiative.*

Learnings and recommendations from the series will be put together in a dialogue with policymakers to be organized by the expert group². These discussions will be consolidated and will be related to issues associated with policies on food security, poverty reduction and sustainable forest management.

Opening remarks and recap of previous discussion

Femy Pinto, WFBL Expert Group Lead and Executive Director, NTFP-EP Asia

Welcome to everyone, good afternoon for those in our Asian timezone, and good morning for those joining us across the world.

We are on the 4th of a 4- part discussion series of the Wild Foods, Biodiversity and Livelihood Expert Group a collaboration between SIANI the Swedish International Agriculture Network Initiative and the Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP). aiming to contribute knowledge and policy recommendations on the Sustainable Development Goal or SDG 2 towards zero hunger but the initiative also opens up opportunities to recommend as well on policies on land tenure, biodiversity – new Global Biodiversity Framework for example- on food security and small holder livelihood and enterprises.

Next year the UN will convene a Food Systems Summit - a global event that seeks to raise global awareness and rally commitments and actions that should transform food systems to resolve not only hunger, but to reduce diet-related disease and heal the planet – it is a call to collective action of all from government to citizens to radically change the way we produce, process, and consume food.

We have a lot we can share and we look to these discussions and rich exchanges to contribute to this summit.

The Expert Group is composed of multi-actor experts based in South and Southeast Asia and Sweden coming from the academe, civil society, community based organizations, practitioners private sector and intergovernmental institution, who are convened to bring social and ecological sciences and practical field based experiences together in enriching understanding on the importance of forests, wild foods and biodiversity for livelihood and food security.

The discussion series is one of the activities of the Expert Group. We are also inviting and collecting stories from everyday people – rural to urban about wild foods online and also supporting country researches about the subject.

The discussion series has the objective to facilitate knowledge sharing on wild foods, rotational farming systems, forest-farm ecosystems, and resource management as a precursor towards developing a regional NTFP Academy - for learning, dialogue and action around forests for food, biodiversity conservation, culture and livelihood in Asia.

For those here for the 1st time, brief recap – the 1st discussion we introduced the subject – definition of wild foods to put us on the same page - wild foods are biological edible resources harvested from the forests as food and which are customarily included in the diets of indigenous and local communities – there is a growing appreciation of these among urbanites who are desiring more sustainable and healthy lifestyles but largely still underappreciated, undervalued as we see in food security policies around and continued forest loss and degradation. Wild foods are part of a rich biological and knowledge diversity of people whose lives are intimately intertwined with the forests. Loss of forests also means a destruction or trampling as well of local wisdom.

² *Date to be finalized and announced*

This was elaborated in the 2nd discussion where we delved deeper into the challenges and struggles about securing tenure and securing indigenous knowledge and there are some examples of initiatives to secure these, revive and protect this knowledge. Women and youth play important roles.

In the 3rd discussion we explored about the links between biodiversity and wild foods. Sustainable use and harvest of wild foods and other natural resources supports and protects biodiversity, rich biodiversity supports the whole life system of our forests, the watersheds, the rivers, the landscape, and in turn supports traditional food systems and keeps them rich and alive. We heard that the view that policies and markets drive the state and conditions of global biodiversity - forestry and agriculture, and in turn affects the food we eat and don't eat and this affects communities in many ways.

We heard some of our speakers speak strongly about the resilience of small holder communities – where biodiversity is kept intact because of the active and still thriving sustainable practices – communities are able to cope and sustain their lives even in times like what we have now with the pandemic.

Today's discussion is the fourth and last discussion in a 4-part series on wild foods, biodiversity and livelihood featuring members and representatives of the NTFP-EP and the Last Forest Enterprises as moderator and resource groups and we are honored also to have community resource speakers from India and Indonesia.

The discussion will focus on local forest based livelihood experiences and how wild foods fit them. How do we make markets work for indigenous food systems and biodiversity conservation; what are examples of community based initiatives and strategies that harness most benefit to communities or local producers – such as local for local strategies. What are lessons about upscaling to other markets ensuring to balance with food sovereignty, ecosystem integrity and cultural values, etc.

Through the reflections and sharing of community speakers, Mathew, Crissy and Femy will react and deepen reflection, elicit questions and will dive deeper to have a rich exchange about good practices or good business models supporting wild foods initiatives for livelihood, coping with the challenges around these and key recommendations to keep these initiatives going - policy wise, support from other stakeholders and the network. How can a network like this help?

I am pleased and privileged to be joined and supported by superstars of the NTFP-EP network from whom we will learn a lot and be inspired from the indigenous communities and our colleagues in civil society – India and Indonesia.

Mathew John is the Managing Director of Last Forest Enterprises, a social enterprise incubated by Keystone Foundation, a civil society organization of which he is also a co-founder Director. Passionate in every aspect that goes into running the organisation, he constantly examines ways in which Last Forest can evolve. He envisions this evolution to be people-centric and based on the values and principles that the organisation stands for. All this keeping in mind the ever-growing demand of markets.'

Some other titbits - Managing Director of Last Forest Enterprises, a social enterprise incubated by Keystone Foundation of which he is also a co founder director. He was on the Board of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM-Organics International, 2011-2017), an international network of close to 900 organizations. Member of their International Committee on Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) which encourages the development and adoption of simple and different approaches to guaranteeing organic produce. Also part of the team to initiate the PGS in India, which the government of India now recognizes and promotes. Passionate about working with small organizations to build their capacities to run ethical & viable businesses. He oversaw the umbrella branding exercise of fair trade retail stores within the country. Closely involved with the Slow Food network to spread the message of good, clean and fair food for all. Was listed as an

`Amazing Indian' by the Times Now network and as one of the top 25 Social Entrepreneurs by Outlook Business.

Mathew's background is in rural development, particularly administration and finance for rural development organizations and field projects. His interests are in enterprise development and organic certification for small growers and harvesters. He has varied experiences working on different projects in India as well as Bangladesh.

Maria Cristina "Crissy" S. Guerrero has worked on non timber forest products community forestry and indigenous peoples concerns over the last two decades. Themes of focus have been community enterprise development, ancestral domain delineation and management, non-timber forest products policy advocacy, participatory resource monitoring (PRM), traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous community conserved areas. Her training is in Business Management and International Development with field experience particularly on the island of Palawan in the Philippines and Indonesian Borneo. She is currently our Senior Adviser for strategic programmes at NTFP-EP, and is one of the pillars at NTFP-EP; She has created and developed and continues to advise key strategic programmes at NTFP-EP including the EXCEED (Expanding Community Based enterprises and economic development) training and advisory arm and social and values based enterprises such as Custommade Crafts Center, Borneo Chic, the Parara Indonesian Ethical Store and Meet the Makers Indonesia - dubbed as a landmark arts and crafts show supporting local artisans.

Together with them we are honored to have other friends from India and Indonesia Mahadesha from the Soliga community in India assisted by Shiny Rehel and from the Dayak collective group of the Borneo, we are honored to have 3 individuals and their relatives with them. We have Desi Christiani, from Krayan community nin North Kalimantan and Pak Nico and Pak Lukas from Punan Adiu, Malinau in North Kalimantan.

This is the first time that we will have translations to allow this exchange. We have the community members also represented.

We have Mathew to kick us off with experiences from India.

Presentations and sharing of experiences

Remarks from Mathew John, Managing Director of Last Forest Enterprises, Co-founder Director at Keystone Foundation, India:

... As we take this forward, I think you know markets is something that we, or a lot of us hesitate to engage with. But I think it is a final link that we all need to understand. We all need to dialogue and see how, at which point we all want to engage with the market.

Even in our own country in India, we are looking at indigenous communities... They form a very small portion of our population. With just 8% and they are also spread in very different pockets of our country. And when we come down to our state, it is even a much more of a minority in our state.

I think what makes it very interesting for us is that when you look at indigenous communities in mountain ecosystems (that becomes a *further* subset, especially for us when we're looking here in the Nilgiris), and you realize that many of the policies that are put out, are put out by people who, number one, have very limited knowledge of indigenous communities and then to further that, they have much more limited knowledge of

indigenous communities in mountain systems. And so, the policies that get activated are sometimes spaces where communities are completely left out and they don't figure in the dialogue process at all.

Looking at the kind of work that we've been involved with: When you look at Keystone, it started off its work primarily from a development perspective. But for us, it was very important that enterprise has to be a very important, a key component of what we do. That we just don't work on the development side and the enterprises are left to the communities to deal with.

And for us, when we started our work with honey, you realize that the large portion of the honey in my country comes from these indigenous communities who harvest it. We never value the effort they put in, we never value the product itself, or the resource itself. And so, when it comes to the market it's in a much more sanitized form and it's something that we just see as a food product and we consume without ever understanding the context of honey or many of the other products that we that we consume.

And for us, taking this out right at the beginning, when you change gears over the last few years, we've seen that there has been over 800% to 900% price increase that we've been able to make an impact in the market today, the price that the community people receive.

I think, very importantly is to be able to tell the story of the people of the communities and the stories of how they are able to bring these products out into the market.

If we go beyond honey, we see there is beeswax. Beeswax is a product whose value was completely not understood and it was even thrown away and for us to be able to bring that product today to a place where there's a huge amount of not only of value, but of appreciation of the communities that are able to produce products. Whether it's lip balms that soaps, or whether it's even a product that has become very popular now is the beeswax food wraps and these are now products that are being appreciated.

You know, if you just went back six months of the questions that any customer would ask you is, *"Is this honey pure? Is this honey hygienic? Has this been processed well?"* Six months down the line, the questions that we received today is *"Is the honey raw? is this honey unprocessed? and is the honey from the forest?"* The kind of difference the virus can make over a period of six months. Today, for customers they understand the value. Now, they understand the value of the kinds of products that they would like to take home for themselves.

So, I think this whole changing perception that has come on up for many customers. I think it is something that we, working in the development sector, we need to be able to engage. We need to be able to pivot our entire story sometimes to be able to address some of their concerns and meet some of those concerns halfway.

Most of the time, we tend to take our products into the market, and say, *"Here it is, and this is what we are giving you"*. We tend to be very dissident about making any changes because this is the product that comes and here it is. And you take it. But sometimes we need to be able to do it and make those changes which the market can engage with.

I think the challenges that many of us continue to face is migration. That continues to have an impact, especially at these times, or is not only here in the Nilgiris, but in many other parts of the country. Migration has increased and for many of these communities, they are unsure of their spaces right now. Where do they stand? Do they move towards an open space or do they remain in their own communities? For them, I think this transition phase today and for this present generation is something that we need to engage with.

COVID has had an impact on many of these communities. Unemployment has gone up and what that has done is in many places, the expectations from the way the government has reacted. The expectations today have actually gone up from the government. And to the communities and many other spaces, they have rejected and are not willing to move or to harvest from forest areas or to do their own homestead farming.

I think for many of these communities, if the market engagement reduces, a lot of their livelihood opportunities will drop. And for that, when Last Forest began as a social enterprise, I think it was important that we are able to address the market challenges, whether it is packaging, whether it is branding, whether it is telling the story in the right way. All of these for Last Forest became very important.

What it has also done is when Last Forest engages with the market, we have also created a producer company which engages at the back end. And so we have Aadimalai (name of producer company) which is a producer company which engages directly with the producers. Capacity building is a very key portion of that so that they are able to make decisions much better. Also, I think, very important is that when we created this producer company, the entire board was taken from the community. And so, decision making for them - they were in spaces where they had to take on those challenges and they have to make those decisions.

Aadimalai as it has grown over the years, it has taken on more and more engagement. With these producers, value addition for them is still a challenge and dealing with many of the traders is still a challenge. And I think that's the route we have chosen to be able to have an institution that engages with the market and an institution that engages with the producers.

I think the convergence of both of this is something that continues to be an exciting journey for all of us. I think those are challenges that will continue to be. The solutions that we bring will be something that are constantly novel for us.

Now, I would like to add Mahadesh into this conversation. Mahadesh has been from the local community is also part of the producer company, but is also very importantly, somebody who engages with the community at the local level on many other conservation issues. He's a keen birdwatcher. He's done a lot of documentation on wild food and I think I would like to hand it over to him to be able to share some of his perspectives.

Somebody who's going to translate for him is Shiny. Both of them work with Keystone. Shiny has looked at biodiversity research for some quite some time. She's done her PhD and today she is able to coordinate many of these activities at the community level, whether it is just conservation many aspects in dealing with the forest department, but very importantly, also to deal with the children and the young people at the village level.

So, over to Mahadesh and Shiny, hope they can give some more insights.

Mahadesh Basavegodwa, Keystone Foundation, India: The indigenous people of Sathyamangalam forest which lies in the north east part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve- Southern Part of India use a wide variety of tubers, green, wild fruits and honey. The wild foods are mainly used of consumption. Some of the wild food are collected and offered to god and then taken for consumption especially the ones collected during the month of Aug- Sep. Locally it is called as Gowri *nombi*. Fruits and honey that are collected are offered to Gods. During the month of January, we celebrate harvest festival called as *Pongal*. During the celebration *Rotti habba* is celebrated- where millets that has been harvested from farmlands and tuber that has been harvested from wild is offered to god.

The tradition knowledge (TK) of wild food has been documented in community participation, involvement the youth from the community to document the wild food. The booklets give details on the available season, recipes and distributed with the members of the community and school children. Post the documentation work it was understood that the younger generation do have much knowledge on wild food. We started Village Elder Programme, where an elder from the village shares TK with the children of the village taking them to their farmlands, nearby forest boundary and explain about local diversity. This is done in the weekends and one of the programme like by children as they find it interesting and know about their local diversity. Food festivals,

promotion of kitchen gardens and conservation education programmes are run to revive their traditional knowledge amongst the community.

Of the wild food collected, Gooseberry and Honey are collected in large quantity and are traded. A community led initiative was started called as Sampigae in Chamrajnagar district of Karnataka state, India. Initially it was going good in procuring local materials, value addition and sales of the products. Latter on due to lack of management skill, leadership and funding it was not successful. A collective of tribal produce group –Aadimalai Producer Company, was started in 2013 to initiate the livelihoods of indigenous communities. It was setup in Hasanur in Erode district of Tamilnadu- Southern part of India. The producer company procures local produce and value adds and markets the products. Annually during the general body meeting profit is shared by the producer company with the share holders who has given product to Aadimalai. Soap berry, Gooseberry, Honey and also farm products is sold to Aadimalai for a fair price.]

Dr. Shiny Rehel, Keystone Foundation, India: The traditional knowledge of the wild food was documented with community participation, involvement the youth of the community to document the wild food because it was a capacity building for the community. People also to understand the importance of wild food and how it's important in their diet also.

So, it was a printed booklet, which gives the details of the season, recipes and it was shared among the community members and the school children also and post the documentation work. It was understood that the Community especially the younger generation, who did not have much knowledge on the wild for they are away from the community because they were for some it was the residential school so they were used to the mainstream education and the foods and the lifestyle.

Also, so they started the village elder program where the elders from the village would take the children to the farmland and also to the nearby forest explain about the local diversity. And it was a learning process for the community. Also, the children did like it and we did it during the weekends for the children.

And they are aware of their local diversity and to promote local festivals, food festival especially promotion of kitchen garden and conservation education program. This has drawn to revive the traditional knowledge amongst the community.

And the wild food and market linkages, because most of the wild food collected were gooseberry and honey, which were large in quantity. The other species was collected and minimum quantity first was, it was for the local consumption. And a community lead initiative was started called Sampigae in Chamrajnagar district of Karnataka state, Southern part of India.

Initially it was going on good in procuring the local material and value addition and also the sales of the product. But later on, due to lack of management skill leadership and also funding. It was not successful and simultaneously a collective was started by the tribal group which is called the Aadimalai Producer Company in 2013 to initiate the livelihood of indigenous communities. It was setup in Hasanur in Erode district of Tamilnadu- Southern part of India.

The producer company procured local produce, value added, and also marketed the product which initially kind of supported the livelihood of the indigenous community.

In this region and annually during the general body meet, profit was shared by the producer company with the stakeholders who provided with the raw materials to the producer company.

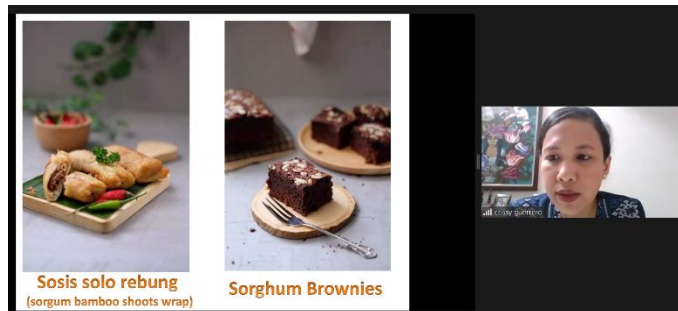
And apart from the Aadimalai product also the farm grown product such as coffee, pepper, also was collected, and value added by the producer company. So, which did give livelihood support and also it was on a fair price.

So it did support the community in the livelihood aspect. So this is perspective shared by Mahadesh on livelihood and its wild food and livelihood connection and sorry that he was not able to connect.]

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: Thank you hiny – I invite Crissy –but before that, I understand that Mahadesh will still try to connect. If you have questions, later on we will have sharing between India and Indonesia and rest of the participants. I invite Crissy to give a brief reaction to that and give some of her thoughts and then introduce also our resource speakers from Indonesia.

Crissy Guerrero, NTFP-EP Asia/PARARA:

Mathew had also mentioned how the markets are changing, they're being more respectful or being more understanding. This is happening, but we still have to find those markets, we still have to engage those markets. Especially during the time of the pandemic, where people are going back to basics, there are some things that people are finding that are not part of their basic needs, but we are trying to focus on the fact that forest foods are very healthy.



Wild foods, local foods are very healthy and this is becoming useful in on how we are sharing the knowledge from the indigenous communities and from the products that we present to the market and differentiating it from the ones that are already out there.

Just to tell a little bit about our endeavor:

Like Last Forest, in Indonesia we're 30 different organizations that have come together, also to work on the principles of local healthy, sustainable and fair and to have our own marketing arm.

I see also Gordon from PACOS on this. He's been here there [PARARA Indonesian Ethical Store] when we've had events in the time that we could actually gather together and not be in fear that we were infecting other people.

And just to give you a little bit of background that we're also supporting different producer groups, something very new. That was launched.

Just in December. And then when we went into the pandemic in March but trying to assist different producer groups and extending even to fisheries, because we have groups that produce sustainable tuna, other kinds of fish and shrimp as well. And we have a similar strategy of trying to present honey with all of its values and this is just a slide of all the different organizations that have come together, because we know that together we are stronger.

What started as a festival in 2015 and now we also have a marketing arm here in the city, but with hopes that we can branch out and franchise as well in different parts of the country. So that we also don't add to carbon footprint by bringing all the products of from all across this archipelago of 17,100 islands all the way to Jakarta. So, we're in the process of discussions of having PARARA in different islands where we can also focus on local forest food, local foods and then bring in a smattering of other foods and products from other places.

Now I'm just going to show a few samples and try to engage in this topic of wild food and biodiversity, I have these two slides. This shows

Sagu but we prepare them as carbonara an Italian dish that people know about and also Soto Banjar which is a local Indonesian dish but not using noodles from wheat, but using noodles made from Sagu.

And I think what is different, What makes us different, and our challenge to the market is - how do we document that the products that we carry are sustainable are healthy, and all of this.

So, considering we have a lot of suppliers. We have different suppliers that have organic certification. We have different suppliers that have geographic indications, we have different suppliers that have art of taste. Slow Food. So, we try to document and even up to the point just have a self-declaration of how these different products, how these different foods, how they contribute in terms of being fair.

How like this Sagu, which comes from Sumatra. It comes from a forest, which is one of the few forests that do not burn during the dry season because it is still within a wet ecosystem, whereas other tree plantations burn much faster.

So, trying to communicate these stories, trying to document them because there are many other healthy and environmental restaurants out there that don't have this kind of knowledge and direct communication with the communities. This is another slide full other photos of the different food that we prepare, one is a [Indonesian food, inaudible]. So, it usually has meat inside, but we have replaced it with bamboo shoots.

With Keystone Foundation with Anita another colleague of Keystone Foundation. We're actually working with ASEAN also as well to bring the documentation of how we have sustainable bamboo harvest, sustainable bamboo management, sustainable shoot management, and in relation as well to the culm management.

How we communicate this that that makes us also different from others that just might be harvesting from anywhere and not might not be regarding about where their food comes from and what makes this special. Both of these dishes use sorghum, a local sorghum from [Timor,.. inaudible location] One example is from Flores were previously before 2014 nobody paid any attention to the sorghum and they were very much dependent on corn and rice and then there was a famine and they realized that this is the sorghum is what can grow in very extreme conditions.

When they made that realization, then they started to inter crop it more among themselves. And when they started to inter crop, they started to have larger volumes and they made a local ruling that they should only keep 60% of their sorghum for their own food security and only sell 40% of it to the market. So, that was how they were regulating the issues of food security versus market and not falling into the trap of selling everything when you have very nutritious food already you're growing yourself.

So, the big disaster we often hear is that there are communities producing organic rice, for example, and they're selling it. But they're selling all of it. So, in the end, if there's famine, they have to buy this Raskin or brass miskin or they call it the rice for the poor, that is doled out by the government. So, it is important to also find that balance and help communities, find that balance.

That is that for the presentation about PARARA and I'm going to turn this off and just wanted to reflect a little bit.

To reflect a little bit about what Mahadesh shared and you will hear more from my colleagues in North Kalimantan and I will let them talk about them for themselves, but I just wanted to draw some of the similarities between the sharing Mahadesh, and what will be shared by Pak Niko and what Mahadesh told us.

That you are using the weekends to bring more knowledge to the children similar as well in Malinau, Punan Adiu. Where the kids are going into town for the week. But on the weekends, they still try to bring them into the forest and they also long for themselves for the sound of the wild boar and that draws them back because they heard it when they were younger.

It is of course still a struggle. When you're in the town, how do you compete with YouTube on your phone, which gives you a lot of loud music a lot of distractions. So, how do you make that kind of knowledge and culture as interesting and where the local people themselves find value.

The last point is also about the changing times in terms of the changing place, changing time. and changing image. This is the last point, changing place meaning for the Punan, they used to travel around more but now that they're linked to markets, linked to the school, linked to the government and dealing with the government, they are moving less and because you move less, you need faster ways of preparing food, you need faster ways.

And so now you know the where local people would have the Sagu or where local people would have the forest banana. They're having the rice, because in 10 minutes you can have that whereas it takes you more than three hours. And that's already near for Malinau to find the forest food.

And so there's a change of place, there's a change of time and a change of image where young, young people are now studying, but the image of a good life is to have to work in an office and get a regular salary. So how do we bring across this message of the importance of the forest of the importance of local foods.

I don't know if Pak Lukas will share. But last year there was a famine in their area and many people were running around, those that were based on rice. Those with their lives already based on rice, we're running around scrambling for carbohydrates. The story was Pak Lucas was like, "no big deal. I can just go into the forest where I can get my forest banana, I can get my sweet potato, and I can get my Sagu and I'm fine."

So, the message? how do you share that message of resilience across generations. So, I am going to stop there because I think I've spoken too much already. And now we're going to introduce, we're going to travel from India, a big continent on its own, to the archipelago of Indonesia, and though I said 17,100 islands, we will focus on the island of Borneo, where our speakers are both from the province of North Kalimantan as you can see this place has a lot to share in terms of local wisdom, forest food, agrobiodiversity.

So, our first speaker. Her name is Desfari Christiani, she's an indigenous woman from Krayan and North Kalimantan. She has a degree in forestry and currently lives in Samarinda. She has previously done work in the Kayan Mentarang National Park. As well as assisted from a foundation and marketing the plated arts of Dayak people. She is currently assisting WWF to map out some foods, food systems, wild foods, and look at the connections with indigenous knowledge systems.

So, I invite Desi, if I may call her to give her presentation. She also has some slides in in PDF form, which I hope maybe someone can share on the screen.]

Desfari 'Desi' Christiani, Krayan Community, North Kalimantan: Hi everyone! Today, I'd like to share about food sovereignty in the Krayan Highlands, the Krayan Highlands consists of 89 villages with five sub districts and populated by over 18,000 people.

The Krayan Highlands has been food secure because of the traditional and organic agricultural system based on high agrobiodiversity, use of buffaloes and clean water.

Local Markets for Food Resilience



People in Krayan is very dependent on the forest for the fulfillment of their daily food in their menu, you can see how they get meat from the wild and some vegetables from the wild and also from fields that they cultivate it themselves. And you can see the soft rice wrapped in banana leaf, that's the example of their daily diet.

In their diet, you can see the source. Where do they get the sales for protein, there is 93% of the protein source which comes from wild forest. They get it from wild forest, especially for example wild boar meat, deer, and civet.

This is the percentage of people who live in in the area that far away from cities and far away from market. You can see that percentage. For vegetables, you could see that 65% of vegetables, they get from forests, grown wild in the forest, while only 35% of various vegetables are cultivated in their field or in their farm.

For fruit, the source of fruit is 53% grown wild in forest. Only 47% cultivated they utilize in their diet.

Various vegetables, they get from forest is like, for example, bamboo shoots, [palm nuts?], various leaves and bulbs and wild mushrooms. These kinds of vegetables grown in the wild, they get for their daily food.

For fruits, they get from the wild in the forest are various types of wild Durian and wild fruits that that can be eaten every day.

A woman plays an important role as the conservation and economic actors in rural economy. They don't just do the planting, but also the cultivating, and harvesting of rice and vegetables.

They also collect their everyday vegetables both from nature and garden and they even sell them as an additional income for their families.

And during COVID-19 lockdown women intensified cultivation of vegetables, production of brown sugar or sugar cane, and production of mountain salt.

There is a very good initiative of indigenous women in being agents of change and traders in the local market. It built economic resilience of their families. Now they have permanent marketplace for their local fresh, natural, and healthy food.

This is the example you can see; they sell their products in the local market. Among them, are almost 100% women and they earn about 15 to 20 US dollars just for vegetables. A variety per selling day and up to 100 US dollar during a rice harvest and [...] season and that's very nice additional income for their families.

Now, indigenous women with the very good initiative where now they try to build their commitment just to sell only local fresh, natural, and healthy food and also now there is a campaign to stop using plastic bags in their transaction and you can see this is how the woman suggest the customer to bring their own bags from home to transact out to buy in the market. And this is how you can see that the women are very consistent to campaign stop using plastic bag for their environment. So, I think that is what I can share today. Thank you.]

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: Thank you, Desi. And thank you, thank you. Crissy also for the intervention earlier. I think that the Desi also had shown an example. Also, the role of women leading terms of interactions with local food resilience and she also showed an example of how, in terms of documentation, as Crissy had said, it also is contributing to the women themselves understanding how they use their resources and then using that information to develop their own strategies, and as Crissy said, dividing between a strategy for keeping themselves well fed having the healthy food themselves as a priority. But then as well, developing strategies to engage the market and bring those produce as well for other local consumers.

We will hear more. I hope that we can have more discussions. If you have any questions for Desi, we can do that after we hear from the next group from Indonesia. But before we go into the presentation and sharing of Pak Niko. And Pak Lukas, we have a film. Here from the Punan Adiu and this film is the Sungai Aren video is about forest food and transfer of knowledge, the younger generation.

I think very similar as Crissy said, there were some similarities in the strategies between India and Indonesia and she was speaking about this this community wherein they are trying to ensure that the younger generation still are able to maintain the appreciation of the forest, keeping that heritage still intact, and the village leaders and the elders themselves showing it off to the kids so that they don't forget, and they still have that as they grow up, they still have that intimate relationship with with nature. So, let's see the brief video.

This is the collaboration of the forest nature trip tripping that the kids did with their elders and in got operation with NTFP-EP Indonesia. ([Link to video here](#))

Crissy Guerrero:

Thank you for showing the film. And just to share, the film was three years ago. And the kids in the film are now sitting next to Pak Niko they were in elementary school, and they are the kids of Pak Lucas, they are now in junior high school and they're able to join us because they're finished with their online class.

So, the video was taken three years ago, they were children of Pak Lucas, who now are sitting next to him they were in grade school and now they are in junior high school.

This is part of the program of NTFP-EP Indonesia to revisit forest foods wild foods and to dialogue this as well with the other parents and as well the teachers. This is the first ever field trip of this elementary school, just to show you how different it was.

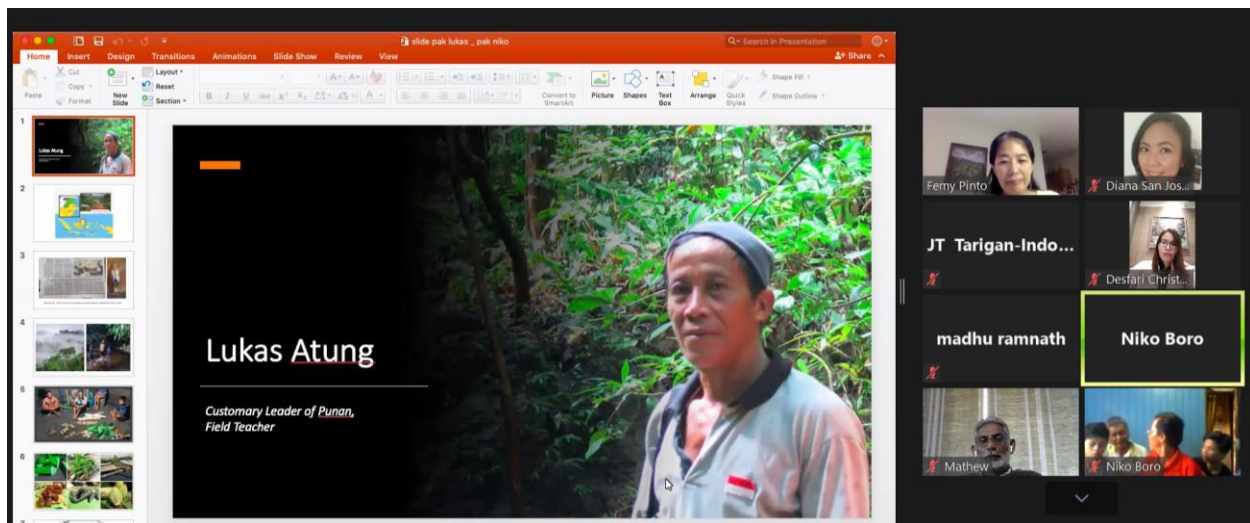
And just to share that the children of Pak Lucas, according to the stories, I wasn't there, but the stories were that they were able to identify like 26 different fish in that river and all of a sudden they became the superstars in their class and people saw them in a in a new light. Having a knowledge that they didn't have. And they didn't know existed. So, this is an interesting process maybe leader and NTFP-EP Indonesia can share what is continued what has gone on after that. So now we introduce our next speaker. And also, somebody who will be helping our speaker. Our next speaker is Pak Lukas who is from the Punan Adiu Village in Malinau.

Actually, they are supposed to receive an award today from the government, one very prestigious environmental award today. They are not supposed to be present but because of the pandemic and the situation in Jakarta with the rising cases, the awarding has been moved. We're glad to have Pak Lukas join us.

He has a position in the community, in his indigenous group. And he also is a teacher, a field teacher and he has with him Bayu and Ansel his kids also with him. He is supported by Pak Niko who is with an NGO supporting the Punan group for the more than 20 maybe 30 years his famous project was the Babi Senang project where they documented the forest trees that wild pigs liked and planted them so that there will be more food for these pigs.

Very interesting project and he's helping them with their Hutan Adat and their work on getting recognition for their land and their forest food. So, without further ado. Pak Lukas will start sharing. Thank you.

Lukas Atung, Punan Adu, Malinau:



Good afternoon! My name is Lukas Atung. I come from Punan Adui village, Hilir Selatan Malinau District, Mallina Regency – North Kalimantan Province. I am the head of the village in planning aspect. I am also their field teacher. On my right is my son Ansel and on my left, is Bayou my son. They are my children – and they are in junior high school 1st year. I was made the customary leader of the Punan tribe in Punan Adui village. In my interactions with NTFP friends, I am called a field teacher or “guru lapang.”

All of us are Punan people. As indigenous Punan, we cannot live without the forest. Many of our needs are taken from the forest.

Therefore, we try very hard to keep our customary forest intact to help us support our daily lives; for our food. We have a large customary land area of 17,400 has. We have divided this area into various functions or activity – to cultivate fields, collect forest products, to collect forest food, where we also grow gaharu trees. There is a place for the village and our homes and there is a “hutan larangan” or forbidden forest. We have divided up space but there are economic interests in customary territory where people want to log, mine, use the land for timber, oil palm plantations.



The problem for us is that if forest is clear cut, and is planted with oil palm or paperwood, then our forest food will have been lost. And life support for future generations will be lost. This is why since 2005, we have been trying to obtain permit from government to obtain forest management rights to protect all inside the forest- timber or non-timber, or forest animals, or forest medicine, and especially for forest food. The source of our livelihood.



The Punan Adiu Village Government issued a village regulation regarding the management of customary areas (wilayah adat) and village regulations regarding the security of the area. The total area - if we do get the forest decree - and 11,000 has of this area will be conservation forest, where we can obtain NTFPs for everyday needs.

When we have this decision, then government will not be able to give permits to other enterprises or companies. This is what we hope will happen. Because everything inside our food, all fish, medicine, are found and protected in our area. So that all riches of the forest are protected in the Punan Adiu area.

With regards to the problems about forest food and the threats, we have passed the issue of threats to forest food sources. In our opinion, the forests and resources of the Punan Adiu are sufficiently protected not only from the people but also from the State.

Regarding the use of forest food, back then when we were children, our daily needs were almost entirely met from the forest. What our parents bought was only necessary things like sugar, salt, tobacco, clothes. Nowadays,

times are changing. We already are living among other ethnic groups/indigenous groups and we are also influenced by others. We started farming, food from forest such as sago was replaced with sweet potatoes and rice. The system of exchange of goods (barter) has now been replaced with exchange for money. This change is starting to be felt from year to year. And when our generation who once lived around the forest ends, it is very likely that the generation today will no longer see the forest as an integral part of lives --- so steps are needed to bring these children back to nature – meaning that even if they are far away and go to university – their identity as Punan as friends of nature, will still live in their hearts.

Even if children are far they come back on breaks, take off alone, and join in the hunting. Regarding forest food, our current generation is making more children more familiar with types of forest plants for food and medicine. We have prepared several guard houses to serve as patrol posts, and tools for learning for children so they can get used to returning to the nature and to the real life of Punan so they are familiar with forest and what is found in the forest. Richness can be used in current life and can be found in the days and years to come.

There are many other ethnic groups – famine season – go into debt and borrow money- sometimes Punan people are not trusted with loans. So during the famine, we turn to the forest. Our customary territory, as our source for survival.

We can hunt, fish, game forest food. We can't live without natural forest around us.

Sometimes people around us feel strange within Punan Adiu forest because the forest cover is still filled with unlogged standing timber. We have refused entry to company in customary territory. Currently maybe other ethnic groups would like to learn from us, on how to live like Dayak Punan live. Other groups are starting to regret that they have allowed company to cut down forest in their area.... And now their customary forest is empty and some converted to mining.

They cut the forest, they lost a lot of forest food, game... Some have moved places, and they have lost their cultural roots as Dayaks.

So it is important to remember that we protect the forest without us cutting it down, because the role of forests and forest products is similar to the role of our mothers who provide us with milk and nurture us.

One of our sayings as Punan Lunang 'l'lang ota ine', Nugum lunang lelum tanoq. (He said a phrase in Punan which says that forest is breastmilk... the earth's safety and security depends on a sustainable forest.)

Thank you very much in this afternoon that is my presentation!

Discussion in the plenary

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: Such wise words. He said, we cannot live without the forest. Congratulations for their award and very brief sharing, just very briefly, I can already see how I can imagine the Punan Adiu community, how it continues to thrive now and how fitting that they receive the, I think the highest environmental award that can be given in Indonesia award.

So, congratulations and also example of the sense of agency, I think. Someone in the chat has mentioned about that and clear example of how they had taken it upon themselves to make sure that their forest is maintained and he finally says mentioned about forest for food, not just for food, but really for survival.

And I think we now open the floor for people to react. You can relate to these examples, or maybe want to learn more, or want to ask questions we have about 25 minutes to have just a free flowing discussion and there are

already a lot of messages on chat and I may read some of them, but I may also invite you all so that we can have a rich discussion invite some of you to just speak to your comments.

Basically, the floor is free for anyone to react. This is not just for the speakers, but of course feel free to direct some of your questions to whomever you want to address your question, too. So maybe to begin, I would just randomly just read some of the messages and then maybe invite some deliver them.

So, for example, from Lukas Pawera

"Thank you, dear Crissy and Desi for a great inspiring presentation.

I think it is very important when Crissy. As mentioned, to keep the balance between selling and consuming own products we have been looking at the diets of several communities and found that some nutritious food groups, or rather sold than consumed. So, keeping the balance is very crucial."

From Aod DC from Laos,

"much thanks for sharing wild foods, they're wonderful everywhere and making people out of hunger."

For the Punan Adiu, Diana has also if you want to read more about the experience of the Punan with the changing forest and changing food systems and what they are doing to try to maintain it. Diana has uploaded the book that I think Pak Lukas and also included the cover of the book on the slides. So, there is a link there for that for that [book on the Punan Adiu village, "Changing Forests and Changing Food Systems"](#).

We have some of the expert group members who are here. To share some of their comments. Can I call on Grace maybe to speak to your comment on the chat.

Grace Wong, SRC: Thanks Femy and thank you for all the speakers for really sharing such great rich experience. And really important insights into this issue. I think I made my comment because in some of the work we are doing it feels like changes happening so fast in these areas, whether it's, you know, kind of land conversion or forest conversion or market practices and a lot of these ideas that we've discussed here, perhaps don't have the time to take traction in a way that can help to generate more equitable or more sustainable development.

So my thinking was, you know, we use the word resilience, a lot and you know that in the Stockholm Resilience Center, we consider resilience both in terms of stability, but also in terms of how people evolve or adapt to change and these adaptations and evolutions can go, of course, in many directions. So, I wanted to ask, perhaps some of the experiences, particularly in terms of like Crissy and others who work with markets and entrepreneurship, how do you differentiate between the different types of markets in these communities and how do you really kind of navigate between different private sector actors. Because we know the market and the private sector is so diverse and you know, kind of different things. So how do you kind of work with that because that seems to be a very strong actor. Thanks.]

Mathew John, Last Forest/Keystone Foundation, India: I think this engagement with the with the market is a challenge because the market is very dynamic and to be able to incorporate how the market is reacting.

For you to be able to put that together when you put the products out. So, the story telling, I think, along with the products is the most important part. If you do not tell the story the market, then takes it as a normal product without any of the other underlying values that go along with the market. So, for us, when we sell or take our products to the market. The story of slow food, the story of fair prices, fair trade, the story of organic, the story of tradition that has to go alongside

Number two, I feel when we engage with the market, we should not engage with the market of trying to meet the entire market demand because then it goes into a loop of infinity. Well, there is always the way the market

defines success is by growth and I don't think with wild foods, with forest communities, with indigenous communities, we can we define success as growth.

So, the way we pitch the product or the way we situate the product in the market, I think, is to extract maximum value and to be able to tell the market that this is in limited quantities and is available only for either a season or is available only for a certain price, where you value the product and not just a labor cost because most people tend to define costs by labor and production costs, rather than the value of the product.

And so, for us when we are put products out into the market. We keep constantly talking about ecosystem services that these communities provide. So whether it is in relation to water the Clean Air, the forest that they conserve. How are we valuing those when we make purchases of these products and we need to be able to appreciate that and add that into the cost of a product that that customers take home.]

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: Thank you, Mathew. Crissy says she will pass, she is translating.

But essentially, I would just add about one of the lessons that I learned in observation with the social enterprises that we have in the network.

It's also knowing why you're there and why you're engaging so that you don't get sucked into the demand driven. Right, Matthew?

They know why they're there, and they know what exactly is it that they need. And so, they know when to say - this is only so much that we will provide because that is what we need.

So, they only go for that particular goal and requirement that they themselves set and it is easy. It is easy to just get sucked into that you know market, market speaks and market is the authority but once you do that, then yes, you can run really into that danger.]

Mathew John, Last Forest/Keystone Foundation, India: I would just like to add here I think is, is that the more we create small units of marketing engagement, rather than trying to create a large enterprise.

Because different communities have different products, different requirements, different needs and if they are empowered to deal with the market, then they are in a much better position, rather than trying to have a huge enterprise which is able to aggregate and deal with the market. And then, then it becomes a race, not a race to the top, but a race to the bottom. Because the pressure on resource becomes very high when we're just trying to engage with the market.]

Madhu Ramnath, NTFP-EP India: It's again related to this. Before that, hello, everybody. My name is Madhu and I work for NTFP-India.

My question is related. And it's a kind of a dilemma I've been faced with. And it's perhaps a cliché question about the one hand, that is, for me going beyond just the documentation of wild foods. One is documented a lot in parts of Asia, and the more you document, you know, there seems to be a kind of number game.

At the same time, one is also putting all this as an available thing for the market. That none of these make any sense enough when you compare the demand which is probable and what we're talking about.

So, the first step is to see that the people around whom get to eat it, get to know it, and use it.

And the second step, whenever the market comes even if we don't call it, the moment something becomes popular, it becomes immediately part of the market and today with the superfood trend, anything can become marketable.

So, the question I've been asked very often because of working on wild foods for many years is, how does one stop this, we see that in the northeast part of India. Many of the wild meats, fish, and even various insects coming into the market getting traded and there is a big danger of depletion. And it does not have the same kind of buffer as cultivated forms.

So, my question is how does one take this further; one, the need to document and the same time watching the market. So, we have different levels one at the community level. How do you put the news across to buyers that maybe you shouldn't eat it, maybe you shouldn't go for this, at least for some years, you know.

Even with Honey, I expect in certain parts of India, it is a dangerous trend to go honey hunting. So, I leave it at this, you know, Matthew, Crissy anybody in the audience. Welcome to answer. Thank you.]

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: So, Desi you presented also your efforts being also Krayan yourself and at the same time you are supporting the women in their strategy for local marketing. But the question of Madhu of how do you make sure you don't really go any further to compromise the resources from the communities and once you get into this demand driven cycle. Then, that might also drive production and drive also the depletion of some of the resources that you are also promoting. You have any thoughts on that?]

Desfari Christiani, Krayan Highlands: A bit based on our experience in Krayan, Krayan is an isolated area. Isolated only by small plane, you can reach our area. So, people in one village is about 300 to 400 people and their needs for food is not so high because the people are just around that big.

It has no difference between they market and they don't market because they market their food only to people in the in the area that don't go to find it themselves like teachers., people who works in a small village office, like that. So, they learn to just to sell food that fit to those people.

As for vehicles in the area, there is no electricity, so they don't harvest or they don't hunt wild meat in abundant number because they cannot keep it more than one day. So, what they can collect is just suit to what people need for one day.

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: JT maybe you can share a bit your experience with PARARA. PARARA is in the city, but you try and also market local food, wild food, forest food. So how would you, in your experience, how would you respond Madhu's question. And what are your strategies to avoid this risk of depletion? Or is it an issue for you?]

Madhu Ramnath, NTFP-EP India: The dilemma between documenting wild foods, which has been going on for many, many years and people who use them habitually. And that's fine. But the moment things become famous, things become super foods, then the danger of it being overharvested. This dilemma is also a kind of cliché question. I mentioned in every discussion, I've had this question. I have not found an adequate answer.

My own experience is to deal with the people whose food it is - if they have ceremonies around it, if they can understand the status, and if they see it's not abundant, they'll not sell.

I can look at the community level only, but the market is not so easily controlled. That's why I thought this question should be thrown beyond just my thoughts but to the audience as a whole because it's a question which will come up again and again in our work.]

JT Tarigan, NTFP-EP Indonesia: Our experience in Indonesia, also have a dilemma between the documentation of the local food between the market. So, for instance, currently Sagu is very popular in Indonesia, especially for the COVID-19. So, in Indonesia, only Papua and Riau island and particularly Kulin Ranti, the main producer of Sagu.

But if we went to Papua a lot of Sagu plants already shift to Oil Palm and also a lot of traditional knowledge related to Sagu also disappear at the community. So currently, the Ministry of Agriculture, together with the environmental and forestry try to develop a plan for Sagu development for Indonesia,

On the other hand, there is very few Sagu practice and also the knowledge in the local community because it's so long time, they are also not practice how to managing the Sagu except for [...] Crissy already mentioned, this is not burned during the forest fire Indonesia in 2015.

Another our experience also related to the PARARA. So, our main objective is to bring community product closer to the market in an urban area. But what we have so far is very few that the practice to document the local food or wild food is still very few access in in the level of community.

I still remember when I went to Punan Adu, together with Pak Lucas and and also under community leaders there. To document, local food in Punan Adu, I am little bit amazed that some young generation also very not good knowledge about the local food.

When I went to the forest with the young generation when they see the list, a lot of young generation also going, "Wow!" Well, so, but they live near the forest, but they are also not very connected with the knowledge that already heritage? Inherited? by their parents or ancestor stories.

Still dilemma, especially for the young generation about how they can still practice the good documentation of the local knowledge about the local food and wild food?

In some places, maybe there is one or two champions. They still have a good documentation of wild food but in general in Indonesia also still there is a gap. This also problem when we expanding to the market in the city. So sometimes when we promote the commodity product. Yeah, we still lack story behind the product because there's a lack of the local documentation in the communities.

So, I hope my thoughts can give little bit answer to Madhu's question.]

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: Madhu is it okay

Madhu Ramnath, NTFP-EP India: Definitely not.

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: [Maybe] not enough. Well, he was saying Madhu that, it seems the documentation is actually lacking than problematic.

Madhu Ramnath, NTFP-EP India: I'm not talking about Indonesia... I'm talking about it as a theme that [will] habitually recur [*]. It has not to do with Indonesia or one highland or anything.

Mathew John, Last Forest/Keystone Foundation, India: I don't think we have an answer, Madhu.

It's maybe in a pocket like Desi was saying, because you know, you have to fly in to reach that island and they have no electricity, maybe it is a self-contained space and so there is much more in control. But in most of the other parts of the world, means access to communication and logistics has become so much more easier. And there's a two-way flow, there's the phone, then the mobile, and the TV also impacts these communities. The push and pull is so strong for many of these people that we are not able to answer as to this is a perfect point that we are able to tackle this.

So, whether it remains documentation, whether it remains limited production for the market this, this may be different in different places. So, so, even for us than the deal as an enterprise, we are constantly challenged in our own heads.

So, either one answer is if the product is appreciated by the market, then you diversify your, your supply source, rather than putting pressure on the same community to go from one x two x.

I didn't know whether that is a perfect answer even then also I have my doubts.

Climate change, making things. So, you know, everything is so variable, especially for wild food that you are further challenged.]

Madhu Ramnath, NTFP-EP India: Exactly. And I think, I just add to this, when we do reach certain kind of dead ends like this in our own arguments and our own understanding of how to go ahead because this challenge is very definite and for many, many products, it has led the wrong way.

So, we know it and we do document it and that seems to be also on one end, if we do it right, It's a very good thing. So, I feel that these are the most interesting areas for thought.

I mean, we use the example of wild food, but I'm sure it is in all developmental work or on all natural resources which are consumed. How much is too much? And that question will remain with us and I think as long as we keep thinking about it and keep conscious that is all.

I don't expect answers.]

Mathew John, Last Forest/Keystone Foundation, India: Yeah. I mean the other big one that constantly, you know, is in my head is ecotourism, you know, it just moving away from wild food to ecotourism. How, on what basis, do you call ecotourism into a community area successful, you know? is it by the amount of revenue generated? Is it that there is still a strong linkage by the community to their own culture? What has the impact of ecotourism had on their own thinking?

We don't have answers and we don't have enough of a timeline to say that yes 30 years 40 years it has worked in a certain place, and so it makes sense. And we are in already in such a tight squeeze for time. So, I don't know whether research or experimentation on or at least moving forward, being aware of these issues and still grappling and finding answers. I think has to go hand in hand.]

Crissy Guerrero, NTFP-EP Asia: I think, well, for the different forest food, for example, that we have and we're purchasing and marketing in PARARA, for example.

There isn't yet, for example, that superfood that's so in demand. In fact, the thing now, is for example for Sagu and stuff that even local people who used to have it in their diet are now turning to other things. So, it's also how do you promote within your own culture that this is a superfood, for example.

But maybe to share some strategies and I know Nola is here as well. And this is also a strategy that we've used in in terms of handicrafts and how you market handicrafts when you have a very large order. And if you take it, then the community will just for one year, stop doing everything stopped doing spiritual cultural activities because they will just produce okay and that's happened to us before. So how do you avoid that?

Now what what we've tried to do, is to try to present to the market that, "Why don't you then order from five different communities, five different kinds of textiles and come up with a collection that would be very interesting." Instead of having the buyer insist that there's only one color, one shade, one fiber okay and that's also what we're trying to do with the food in the sense that we have sagu noodles from different areas. So, we tried to also buy from different areas so that we can stimulate and support economies, but to lower the pressure that is also all coming from one area.

Of course, there are the special products that are on another level, which I know Cristina Eghenter is here. The Krayan products are also on a different level in terms of how chefs, find the way the rice tastes, the way the sorghum tastes, etc. So, what we're trying to do is also trying for the other sorghums and for the others that are not at the level of Krayan, when like Krayan now, I'm still waiting for my delivery on that small plane is not here.

What other foods with similar characteristics can we also offer what that has a good taste, the taste is everything now to market. The story and the taste has to come. So, providing options and also listening. I told the story about the group in Flores, they themselves set up the limit of 60% they will not sell more than 60% of their sorghum.

And then this deals with a question about protection. So, there are many different ways that communities are monitoring or guaranteeing that these are protected in Krayan they have their internal control system. We are also introducing and as well as in Indonesia, the participatory guarantee system to see how from forest to table.

We have made sure that these have protected the forests, have not done any undue damage, have not been contaminated along the way. And of course there are challenges with that.

But I think more and more, we are finding buyers. We even have, you know, buyers who are looking at these guarantee systems from Europe. That are interested because they know that other kind of certification guarantees systems are too expensive and are adding burden, rather than relieving communities through other markets.

So, that's just one idea. We have to ourselves propose other options. There are other superfoods out there.]

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: So, it just the last question. I know there you have a few more on the chat. But as we are running out of time, we will make sure that we can respond later either e-mailing you or including it in the documentation with the responses to your questions. But to make sure that we hear from our other speakers.

There are two questions that I would use from the chat to direct to Pak Lukas, in the first one and then another one for the kids that are with Pak Lukas.

So, first question is, "With migration of younger generations from villages, how do you see the transition of the protection of customary forests to the next generation?"

The next question, which are for the kids.



Question for Lukas' boys.

"How were they able to learn about their forests and wild foods alongside going to school and how do their school mates from other communities view their food habits?"

I would just add, maybe it has been a few years since that nature forest tripping and I'm sure they they continue to do this, but they are now older but maybe they can just leave us with a few thoughts of how they think now about their forests and what is their kind of vision for the future?]

We always take care of children whatever we do. It would be a shame if they forget everything even when they go to other cities. We make a field school for them in bringing them to forest so they continue to remember.

This year there is season for wild pigs. When they come back from town they go themselves to see pigs when they play in the river. He has 1 child who has married with Pontianak, West Kalimantan but still come back so even if marrying with other cultures and other ethnic groups, they still understand Punan culture. This involves understanding the forest.

Bayou – you go to school and forest, how is that? How come you go to forest when you go to village?

Bayou – since I was young it is part of everyday life. So it becomes what ties me to forest – it is something I did since I was small and I have known what the benefits from forest are from own consumption and selling products.

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: So, while we're waiting just was just asking also Shiny and Mahadesh, if you wanted to say something.

Shiny Rehel, Keystone Foundation, India: I just want to share an observation which we had like the recent two months, due to the pandemic, the children in their village. But what we observed was like most of the children were being away from the village but when they were back in the village, they were quite very happy being in the village, and also being with their parents. And all the parents also were there in the village who don't have to go for daily wages. It may be a coincidence, which made them to go back to the traditional agriculture.

And the whole family was into bringing traditional agriculture, especially the millet farms in their land. So, children are also part of the agriculture. When we were talking to them, they are sharing that, "This is a pandemic, we know that we're not able to go to school, but when school is reopen we are happy to go back to the school and studying, but now I'm also happy in learning how to do agriculture. Now, I'm able to I define the different millets what we talk about." And also, they find the natural regeneration of some of the tubers in their farm. So, they say, "it also gives us pride in knowing what we had in our field. Because we were learning the same thing in in our classes for some it, the importance of organic agriculture, the pollution."

So, this lockdown kind of created importance of what the lifestyle was. So, this is something which we experienced in this recent lockdown by going to the villages.

(Shiny, translating for Mahadesh): He says, in recent times, there had been restrictions from the Forest Departments where they were not allowed to collect wild food from the forest.

There should be a policy level change which bring backs these wild food into their diet, which also can be provided by the department also as part of their diet.

He says that if the communities is allowed or permitted to collect the wild foods from the forest, it would bring in a cordial relationship with the agency which is working with him or with the Forest Department to sustainability collect the wild food from the natural resources.

Closing remarks

Femy Pinto, NTFP-EP Asia: So, thank you everyone. I know we already exceeded our time. Thanks for still staying on, pretty much everyone stayed on till the end. And this is our last discussion, but we continue with our discussions online.

I guess the main message, I wouldn't try to summarize everything. But essentially, I think one of the greatest messages or most striking message that I got here is really the importance of nurturing, the sense of agency of the people themselves who are dependent on the forest and indigenous communities like the Krayan, Soliga

community, the Dayak community. These are the main keepers of the forest, and keepers of the knowledge of from the forest, and these are very important.

Basically, it starts with them, it starts with the elders, the village leaders, those who have really the power to keep the knowledge intact and to pass it on. And these are the important actors to keep wild foods, the biodiversity, and the livelihood of the community, and the traditional food systems intact and be able to really stay resilient. Otherwise, as we say there are forces that can easily drive people away from the sustainable principles of harvest and utilization of wild foods and natural resources.

So, I think, any interventions, future interventions for us who are in the NGO sector and how we advocate, it's really the essence of protecting and nurturing that sense of agency of the communities is really important, capacity building for them, and giving them the encouragement to stay on and keep on, keep their resources and their traditions alive.

We are documenting these discussions and we are making the transcript and visual summaries. We're also posting them on both the SIANI and NTFP-EP websites and also try to post them also on Facebook. So, if you are using these platforms, you will see us. Otherwise, we will also share the documentation to all registered participants and hopefully because this time there were a lot of messages on the chat and some questions. So, we will maybe circulate it also to the resource speakers and if they have something to respond to these questions, we can just kind of pull them together in the documentation as much as we can and share that to everyone.

We have also the resources from the Punan Adu, as I mentioned, their documentation from the field surveys. It's available online with NTFP, but we also gave the link of the book, I think that this also much of what we had discussed and what you had seen in the video. That's just a glimpse. There are also some interesting messages and text and photographs, also in the in the book.

Wild food stories. Robin, if we can show them that that campaign is still ongoing. I know some of the people here have also been chatting and putting also their reflections. You can, at the same time also contribute these reflections and more in the wild food stories campaign.