

NEW TIPPING POINT

Creating pathways for effective forest restoration strategies through proactive multi-stakeholder collaboration



A tipping point is when small changes or events become significant enough to cause a larger change. Philippine forests need a new and positive tipping point. Years ago, the tipping points were negative: degradation, loss of forest areas, decreasing biodiversity, among many others. These can be linked to anthropogenic influences and triggers, and might be coupled by impacts of a changing climate. For the country, this could lead to more unpredictable weather patterns and extreme weather events. Today, forests and the people living in them need a new tipping point to turn things around – to regain the safety nets provided by forests, and to see sustainably managed forests as efficient carbon stocks.

As early as 1991, the Philippines initiated an Inter-Agency Committee on Climate Change through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST). This became an Administrative Order (AO 220 1991) which aimed to coordinate, develop, and monitor climate change-related activities and concerns nationally. In 2009, the Climate Change Act (Republic Act (RA) No. 9729) was put in place with the primary goal of mainstreaming climate change into government policy formulation, and establishing a comprehensive, long-term climate change framework strategies and programs. The enactment of RA 9729 provided the creation of a new body, the Climate Change Commission, with the mandate to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate government climate change programs and action plans.

To date, the Philippines has implemented several programs and projects to help enhance community governance of forests, and strengthen mitigation and adaptation efforts on both local and national levels. Some of these efforts include the National Greening Program (NGP), Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), and several local community-based forest management projects. On a more specific note, there was research on the Master Plan for Climate-Resilient Forestry Development, which aimed to document how plans can be effectively integrated at both local and international levels. This brief pushes forward the call of participants of the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) in 2018 to restore forests, and create proactive multi-stakeholder partnerships to enhance the implementation of climate change programs and projects.

Understanding vulnerability: Why forests must be restored

A report by the Committee on Climate Change in 2014 revealed that the Philippines' vulnerability rank has moved from 12 to three, implying that the country is exposed and sensitive to more threats, and that communities need to improve their adaptive capacities. About 60% of land in the Philippines is exposed to multiple hazards, and approximately 74% of the population is vulnerable to natural disasters due to geographical location, poverty, and limited capacities of both communities and local-assisting institutions.

The country's vulnerability calls for common grounds regarding governance and natural resource management and conservation. To operationalize a landscape-based approach to achieve this aim, several pre-conditions must be in place. The first and most crucial is bringing sectors and stakeholders together to collaboratively plan, design, and manage their landscapes and resources. These plans include, but are not limited to conserving biodiversity, conserving threatened habitats and species, sustaining ecosystem-linked livelihoods and enterprises, improving agricultural production, and enhancing capacities for mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts. These plans and activities should be firmly included in the Forest Land Use Plans of local government units, as well as their Comprehensive Land Use Plans, Comprehensive Development Plans, and Zoning and Management Plans.

Environmental problems, including those exacerbated by climate change, are complex in nature. As such, simplistic and sectoral approaches will not provide holistic solutions, but can only impede the process in the long run.

Despite establishing the country's vulnerability to climate change and other natural hazards, both national agencies and local government units are still challenged to come up with up-to-date data and evidence to support plans and policies. Some of the emerging methods and tools include establishing regular landscape monitoring research, spatial analysis, policy analysis, natural resource valuation, vulnerability and resiliency studies, among others.

While having the plans is one challenge, it is yet another to ensure that the plans, activities and policies are implemented properly in the specified landscapes. Once the plans are in place – policies, directions, strategies, and funding – the next challenge is to ensure that communities have improved tenurial rights, and that communities have support for on-site implementation of programs and projects.



Creating a new normal: How multi-sectoral collaboration provides holistic solutions

One challenge to addressing climate change cascades down from problems on vulnerability, to problems with proactively nurturing collaboration between civil society organizations (CSOs) and the government. Environmental problems, including those exacerbated by climate change, are complex in nature. As such, simplistic and sectoral approaches will not provide holistic solutions, but can only impede the process in the long term.

CSO-government collaboration is difficult to operationalize for several reasons. First, there are limited capacities and opportunities to engage effectively. Second, programs and projects might have been conceptualized and implemented without one consulting the other. A further reason is that it is difficult for diverse CSOs to form common positions. But definitely, the country has places and efforts to build from.

There is a collaboration initiative called the Philippine Working Group (PWG) which aims to bring together government agencies and CSOs to address challenges regarding community-based natural resource management, and strengthening disaster risk resilience. In Mindanao alone, several local environmental alliances have been operating since as early as 1995, including Bukidnon Watershed Protection and Development Council (BWPDC) (1995); Lanuza Bay Development Alliance (LBDA) (2002); and Allah Valley Landscape Development Alliance (AVLDA) (2003).

The Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC) shared seven working points for effective CSO-government collaboration. These are to: (i) find opportunities for citizen management, (ii) find reform-minded individuals who have successfully crossed from CSOs to government and vice versa, (iii) encourage donors to provide platforms for constructive engagement and flexibility to adapt to local contexts, (iv) join platforms and spaces for constructive engagement, (v) improve trust, bridge knowledge gaps and provide shared experience between civil society and government officials, (vi) provide incentives to change officials' behavior and attitudes on engagement with civil society, and (vii) strengthen and increase engagement and collaboration with policy makers.

The private sector has a big role to take in restoring forests. Energy Development Corporation (EDC) is a 100% renewable energy company that implements a nationwide greening program (BINHI). This aims to restore denuded forests, preserve and propagate threatened native tree species, and protect biodiversity through four strategies: resource mobilization, capacity building, creating partnerships, and advocacy. To date, BINHI has already planted 9,196 has. with 6.3 million seedlings, rescued 96 threatened species, and organized 117 farmers associations.

The Tagbanua tribe is calling out to other indigenous peoples, that together with their advocacy for inclusion and tenurial rights, they should also work with their communities to conserve their landscapes.

New practices: Responding to an extreme weather event to sustain a tribe

In the midst of the new normal, the stories of indigenous peoples provide useful insights into how they have observed changes within the landscapes, and how they have steered their practices to pathways that will help them better and sustainably manage their resources. Such examples are the stories of the Tagbanua people, the oldest inhabitants of the Palawan islands.

During the NED in 2018, one Tagbanua representative told the story of how they changed practices after Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013. For the longest time, they have used mangrove for various purposes, but they did not replant the areas they harvested from. After Typhoon Yolanda, they were visited by several experts and were taught about the importance of mangrove forests, especially in how they protecting them from possible storm surges, and how they help to sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

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Paving concrete pathways: How solutions must be intricately woven and integrated

Based on the dialogues and workshop sessions, participants came up with three major policy recommendations and actions to ensure effective landscape governance.

Open the discourse on charter change. The pending charter change poses new challenges and threats to the country's landscape and landscape governance. With a stronger regionalism in place once the new charter is enacted, stakeholders from various sectors, agencies, and landscapes might find it harder to work together. Studies on possible impacts to natural resources and management are also not in place to guide stakeholders.

Advocate for the passage of green bills. These include the Alternative Minerals Management Bill (AMMB), Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCA) Bill, National Land Use Act (NLUA), Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Bill, and Green Certification. These green bills will help appropriate indigenous peoples push forward policies on public-private community partnerships, strengthen the accountability of resource managers, and strengthen community-based approaches.

Create a forest and climate change alliance. Having an alliance focused on addressing challenges on forests brought about by the changing climate can help to jumpstart work to effectively engage government and CSOs. Once alliances are in place, they can be strengthened through linking them with institutions involved with achieving Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

The problems faced by the country's forests continue to grow, so everyone's efforts should aim to establish a new tipping point - to help reduce the rate by which our forests are being lost.



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LIVING FROM WITHIN

Putting indigenous peoples at the core of environmental and natural resources management



The Philippines is home to an estimated 14-17 million indigenous peoples who belong to 110 ethno-linguistic groups¹. Communities of indigenous people are spread all over the country, but most are concentrated in the Mindanao area (61%), and the Cordillera Administrative Region in Northern Luzon (33%). On a global scale, almost 80% of the world's biodiverse areas, and 67% of the wildest areas are on land where indigenous peoples first lived. Given these numbers and situations, it is imperative to involve them in the growing discourse on landscape governance.

This brief introduces indigenous practices from three communities who presented their experiences during the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) held in 2018. Their contributions provided cohesive and compelling narratives of how indigenous communities should be embedded in planning and managing landscapes. They know their landscapes in ways that others cannot fully understand, and can never fully experience.

Indigenous peoples and protected area management: The case of the Daraghuyan tribe

The Daraghuyan tribe considers Mount Kitanglad Range Natural Park their home. In 2000, the park was declared a protected area, and in 2010 was declared an ASEAN Heritage Park. Stakeholders in the protected area implemented a tribal governance and multi-stakeholder management practice which ensured strict protection of the area's natural resources. The Daraghuyan tribe values Mount Kitanglad as a sacred place where they perform their annual ritual called *panungdan* to pay respect to the spirit in the mountain who helps them protect all living creatures.

¹ UNDP. (2010). Fast Facts Lagom. United Nations Development Programme Philippines. www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/library/democratic_governance/FastFacts-IPs.html

² Evans, M. (2018). And again, experts proclaim the importance of indigenous rights. Global Landscapes Forum. <https://news.globallandscapesforum.org/31769/and-again-experts-proclaim-the-importance-of-indigenous-rights/>

As an indigenous people community, the Daraghuyan tribe has a council of elders who provide guidance to its people. The tribe was able to establish a Cultural Heritage Center that serves as a physical shop where the tribe can showcase their culture and crafts.

In addition, the community was able to set up the Inhandig Tribal Multi-purpose Cooperative (ITMC). This provides opportunities for tribal members to enhance their knowledge and capacities on coffee growing, processing, and marketing. The tribe also puts importance to its youth groups by providing scholarships, so students are able to enter different universities and finish their degrees, and are well-acknowledged by the community.

Indigenous Peoples know their landscapes in ways that others cannot fully understand, and can never fully experience.



Sustainable mangrove forest management: The case of the Tagbanua people in Caluit and Quezon, Palawan

The Tagbanua people found in Caluit and Quezon are one of the oldest ethnic groups in the Philippines. In 2010, they were awarded a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT). Alongside their efforts to secure this recognition, they also developed an Ancestral Domains Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP) in 2006, which they revised and updated in 2016. As an indigenous peoples' community also present in Busuanga, having a large area of mangroves, their plan emphasizes the cultural and sustainable aspects of mangrove forest management.

The ADSDPP specifies that they cannot sell harvested materials, and that they can only use mangroves for building their own houses. Also, only trees that have died naturally or have been destroyed by typhoons can be used as fuelwood.

Violators will face necessary sanctions. To ensure sustainability, communities have divided the largest mangrove area into three parts, and only one mangrove zone is open for harvesting at a given time. After the harvesting period, communities replant the area before proceeding to the next zone to allow the forest to regrow at regular intervals.

The mangrove forest sustains most of the activities of the communities, and protects them from natural hazards. When super typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) struck in 2013, most of their mangrove areas were affected. Since then, the indigenous peoples have undertaken restoration activities.



Indigenous political structures: The case of the Tēduray and Lambangian people

In the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in Maguindanao (ARMM) Province, and parts of Lebak, Sultan Kudarat, in Region XII, Tēduray and Lambangian indigenous people number more than 127,000. Their areas have armed conflicts between the Philippine government and Moro rebels, including the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and two government-acknowledged Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) camps.

Tēduray and Lambangian people practice an indigenous political structure called *timuay* justice and governance, or *késéfanang-guwit timuay*. *Timuay* comes from the word *timu* which means 'gather', and anyone from the tribe who can gather people is a *timuay*. Their indigenous political structure is composed of customary laws called *ukit*, *tegudon*, and *dowoy*. The *timuay* is a traditional and tribal form of leadership which is anchored on a collective form of leadership, including participation of members in assemblies called for by the tribal title leaders, or *baglalan*.

Aside from their indigenous political structure, Tēduray and Lambangian people are also known for their indigenous livelihood system called *sulagad*. This political structure considers *sulagad* as their agricultural system, where they do not use chemical pesticides or fertilizers, but only use traditional practices to keep their land fertile. The use of *Sulagad* has helped communities ensure sufficient and sustainable harvests, while they also offer their *umun*, or pledge, to the tribal political structure.



The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act: 20 years on

Communities thrive and continue to grow their culture and practices, and at a national level, a protective provision is needed. This provision should ensure indigenous peoples are not exploited or excluded from discourses on development and natural resource management. In 1997, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (Republic Act No. 8371) was signed into law. This covers four sets of rights:

(i) rights to ancestral domains and lands, (ii) rights to self-governance and empowerment, (iii) rights to social justice and human rights, and (iv) rights to cultural integrity.

However, even with this republic act in place, communities still experience challenges, including the difficulty of asserting their rights over ancestral lands. In recent years, many development projects overlap with ancestral territories, sometimes by as much as 60%, including mining, agro-industry, and major infrastructures such as dam construction. But the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act has hardly been used as a defense for indigenous peoples in court cases, and has not been maximized as a policy to protect and enrich communities.

Indigenous communities still experience difficulties of asserting their rights over ancestral lands.



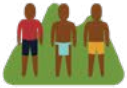
Indigenous Peoples' Community-conserved Areas (ICCA)

To ensure that ancestral lands are duly protected due to their cultural importance, the Indigenous People's Community-conserved Areas Act (ICCA) was drafted in 2012, alongside the Manila Declaration that emphasized their rights to land and resources, and that specified the roles of indigenous people's organizations, government, and civil society. Such areas with the act in place has an added layer of protection to indigenous peoples, specifically when considered as environmentally-critical areas.

The Manila Declaration drawn up at the 1st ICCA conference included 68 indigenous peoples' organizations together with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), academic institutions, international and local non-government offices. This paved way for indigenous peoples' organizations to

become engaged in the growing discourse, with the declaration also emphasizing that they should be given recognition and support for enhancing capacities in terms of managing indigenous peoples' community-conserved areas.

The hope is to get the ICCA Act passed into law. But currently, proponents and supporters still need to address the challenges of conducting subnational consultations for registry. They also need to gain more support for the Secretariat of the Philippines ICCA Consortium to implement community conservation plans in project sites.



Strengthening support for indigenous peoples

Based on documented practices and challenges, there is still much to be done to strengthen local and national support for indigenous peoples. These include: **(i) including indigenous peoples in planning national agendas, (ii) keeping indigenous practices at the core of environmental management, (iii) learning from their best practices, and (iv) securing land tenure for indigenous communities.**

The challenge to include indigenous peoples in the national agenda begins with good representation of stakeholders. Currently, national planning and implementation either does not fit with real on-the-ground situations, or is difficult to implement. The challenges of keeping indigenous practices at the core, and learning from best practices, can be addressed by properly documenting indigenous practices. Such documentation can be enriched when communities are always well-represented in local and national discourses on environment and natural resources management. To illustrate this complex context and to provide insights on indigenous practices, national mandated agencies and researchers must take up the challenge and immerse themselves within indigenous peoples and their communities. On the challenge of securing land tenure, existing policies and practices must be reviewed and revised in such a way that they fully enable communities to be granted with Certificate of Ancestral Land Title (CALT) and Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT).

Today, landscapes are being managed in sectors and parcels, but communities who have lived for generations in the center of the same landscapes can provide insights that agencies and organizations may not have given enough attention to.



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BANKING ON STRENGTHS
OF COMMUNITIES

Rooting for landscape artisans

Landscapes have unique features, as do the communities that live in them. Besides environmental issues, landscapes and their people also face economic problems. That is why at a landscape level, it is also important to look at viable mechanisms and strategies to sustain local enterprises, tourism, and indigenous practices that can enable improved protection of natural resources. At the planning level, community livelihoods and sustainable enterprises are supported by the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022. This focuses on building a resilient, innovative and knowledge-based economy to accelerate growth. This plan also highlights the limited contribution and potential of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors to the generation of employment and entrepreneurship. As such, the plan focuses on improving high-value chains, technologies, enterprise models, agricultural diversification, infrastructure, financial services, and securing sustainable sourcing of natural resources.

In 2012, the Poverty Reduction through Social Entrepreneurship (PRESENT) Bill was initially submitted to congress, and had its first reading in 2014. Following revision, the pending bill aims to promote an environment conducive to the growth of social enterprises through the establishment of a Social Enterprise Development Council, and a Center for Social Enterprise Development for implementing support programs. However, the bill remains pending, because of a continuing lack of clarity of the definition of what the term social enterprise encompasses.

Successful and sustainable community enterprises should have the following elements:

- (i) People and organization – the capacity of people to cooperate and link with other actors in the value chain, and individual and organizational skills, values, and initiatives.
- (ii) Resources – both the accessibility and availability of resources – natural, financial, inputs, and technologies – that will help promote and sustain community enterprises.

(iii) Innovation and technology – new business models, products and processes that help to enhance the value and competitiveness enterprises.

(iv) Market and business models – the adaptive capacity of business models to respond to the demands and changes in the market.

(v) Enablers and an enabling environment – policies and regulations, and institutions and groups, that provide timely and competent support to community enterprises.

During the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) held in July 2018, representatives from different landscapes presented their local livelihoods and sustainable enterprises. These practices offered inspiration to others to identify existing community-based enterprises, and design working business models for their own landscapes.

Learning from dedicated and empowered communities: The Lindungawan enterprise

Lindungawan is a higaonon word meaning ‘window’. The enterprise is owned by the Diocese of Malaybalay, and promotes Hinabol handicraft products such as purses and notebook cases, and local food items such as jam, dried chips, and fresh juices. Members also make time to strategize and make decisions on effective and competitive costing and pricing, and expanding their market through attending trade fairs and bazaars in different areas. In addition, they invest in youth through teaching them the processes and art of making Hinabol products, acknowledging that the Lindungawan enterprise can only be sustained if community members continue to produce existing and new products that promote their culture and landscape.

Enterprise members identified and shared their three most valuable lessons. First, they learned the importance of playing a full part in the value chain and maintaining good relationships with their suppliers. Second, was the importance of staying in the supply chain, keeping their customers and maintaining their regular markets. Lastly, they re-emphasized the value of joining local trade fairs to promote their products. Local trade fairs helped them to not only expand their markets, but to also expand their imaginations as to where and in what forms they can take their handicrafts.

Stories from Sabang mangrove forest: The Paddle Boat Tour Guide Association

The Sabang Mangrove Paddle Boat Tour Guide Association is an example of community-based sustainable tourism in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. It was founded in 2000 with support from the City Tourism Office, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Conservation International, Palawan Conservation Corps, Palawan NGO Network Inc., Protected Area Management Board, Barangay Cabayugan Council,

and local community tour guides. Currently, it has 19 members from 17 different families in the community.

The association promotes the sustainable management of mangrove forests through sustainable tourism in Barangay Cabayugan. They promote the area as a tourism destination where tourists learn about their sustainable management practices while also getting to see for themselves the actual sites. They are also involved in conservation programs where community members help by planting new mangroves and conducting regular monitoring activities. Biodiversity conservation also receives the highest share of association expenses at 60%, followed by capital outlay and operational expenses, both at 10%.

The association takes pride in having received numerous awards, including Mayor's Awardee in 2012, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples certificate, the Top Community Based Sustainable Tourism (CBST) Performing Award 2017, and Certified Wildlife Friendly by the Enterprise Works. In 2017, the association generated an income of PhP3,364,920 (USD65,106), with a monthly average member's share of PhP10,333 (USD200). As of June 2018, the association generated a total of PhP3,099,400 (USD65,106). It was also able to produce a consortium project proposal that helped fund eight organizations through a PhP6 million (USD116,091) grant from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Grants Programme.

The association president, Celestino Santander, mentioned two of their main challenges—unpaved roads which make their tourist site difficult to access at times, and tenure instruments to grant road access. He also noted that they are continuously expanding their networks and partnerships, and are embarking on increasing savings and improving financial management.

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Almaciga resin: Reaping the harvest of an intergenerational indigenous practice

The Samahan ng mga Palawano sa Amas Brooke's Point (SPABP) of Puerto Princesa, Palawan, shared their successes starting in 1989 when they supported 150 indigenous families to achieving a Certificate of Ancestral Land Claim (CALC) covering 725 has. In 2007, they were registered as a Multi-Purpose Cooperative (MPC) with 28 members, but have since expanded to more than 500 families in two Barangays, Amas and Saraza.

In 2008, with the help of the Non-Timber Forest Products - Exchange Programme (NTFP-EP) and Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan Inc. (NATRIPAL), the cooperative was granted a permit to harvest almaciga

(*Agathis philippinensis*) resin in an area of more than 1700 has. The resin, harvested by tapping the bark of the trunk, also known as Manila copal, is used in manufacturing varnishes, paints, soaps, ink, plastic, shoe polish, floor wax, etc. The group started with 43 harvesters, and now includes 190 indigenous Pala'wan members.

Harvesting of almaciga resin provides both social and environmental benefits for the communities involved. Harvesting provides social benefits by providing employment to members of the Community-Based NTFP-EP Enterprise (CBNE), and they get the highest price possible for the resin they collect when directly linked to buyers. Also, developing this sustainable indigenous practice is encouraging other communities in neighboring municipalities and provinces, to learn directly from the cooperative's experience.

The almaciga concession areas are owned by the community. Members ensure that trees are assigned to and managed by appointed individuals who are both committed and knowledgeable in managing and protecting the forest. Also, almaciga trees can only thrive in natural, primary, and undisturbed forests, which means that in order for members to ensure long-term economic benefits, they must also implement protective measures in their forests.

Weavers of hope: The Case of Samar communities

Samar is home to one of the country's largest and unfragmented tracts of lowland rainforest. In Basey, communities enjoy the bounty of tikog (*Sagittia aquatica*) a native reed plant found in swampy area. It is used as a raw material for weaving mats, or banig. In Basey, most weavers are old, earning only PhP640 (USD12) a month, and so they did not want their children to become weavers but to find other, better, sources of income.

An organization called Woven aimed to provide Basey weavers an opportunity to improve their livelihood, and to also start weaving new stories from their generation to the youth. They introduced new financing mechanisms to make the weaving industry more attractive to Basey women. In 2017, the share that weavers obtained from each mat rose from PhP165 to PhP360 (USD3 to USD7) if they had tikog on their



own land, or up to PhP230 (USD4.45) if they had to buy their tikog. The weavers have also innovated with new products, with different styles of mat, laptop sleeves, purses, wallets and key chains. They have shown that are able to innovate in their art, showcase their creativity and culture in new markets, finding homes for their traditional crafts in a modern world, and encourage youth to see the value of weaving and becoming artisans.

Concrete plans for community livelihood sustainable enterprises

NED participants identified six concrete actions to help pave pathways for the various community livelihood and sustainable enterprises.

These are:

- (i) design an information campaign** - NGOs and CSOs can help by marketing or promoting community-based forest enterprises.
- (ii) partner with state universities and colleges (SUCs)** - start proactive partnerships with SUCs to conduct research and capacity development activities among communities.
- (iii) develop a common platform** - NGOs and CSOs can help SUCs and other organizations to make their technologies available on a landscape level.
- (iv) harness multi-stakeholder partnerships for improving landscape community-based livelihoods** - conduct inter-community capacity buildings that can help participants understand market dynamics, and the uniqueness of each of their products.
- (v) incorporate community-based livelihoods in tourism in the development plans of local government units (LGUs)** - revisit management plans, and ensure that livelihood components are well integrated and emphasized.
- (vi) work towards policy agenda setting** - help communities secure certification for their activities or products.

While livelihoods and sustainable enterprises work at a community level, communities will benefit if they are supported and promoted on landscape level, and at the national level where they can encourage more funding and policy support.



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THE URGENCY

Situating the water and
agriculture sectors in
landscape discourses

NATIONAL DIALOGUE PUBLICATION

The Philippines is an agricultural country, with more than 26 million people working in the agriculture sector, or a quarter of total national employment. But according to the Philippine Statistics Authority, in 2017, the gross value added of agriculture and fishing sectors, together accounted for only 8.5% of the country's gross domestic product, though in the same year, the government invested PhP120 billion (US\$2.3 billion) in the agriculture sector alone. The urgency here is to ask some questions at a landscape level. Are farming and water systems properly embedded in the discourses? And is it the time to confront the challenge of working together?

Policies and regulations: What has been done?

It is challenging to bring together key players and stakeholders in the water and agriculture sectors, with almost 30 agencies managing the country's water resources on national and local levels. The country does not lack the policies to govern and manage resources. Presidential Decree (PD) No. 1067 was signed in 1976, stipulating the enactment of the Water Code of the Philippines that established the laws governing the ownership, appropriation, utilization, exploitation, development, conservation, and protection of national water resources.

Executive Order (EO) No. 116 stipulated the creation of the Bureau of Soils and Water Management - Department of Agriculture (BSWM-DA) as the mandated agency to formulate measures and guidelines for effective utilization of soil and water resources as vital agricultural resources to attain food security stability. The Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 (AFMA) (Republic Act (RA) No. 8435) provides the policy framework and support measures integrating all development plans and agricultural policies to modernize the agricultural sector and increase its competitiveness.

In 2006, EO No. 510 created the River Basin Control Office (RCBO) under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). This addresses the sustainable provision of water through a comprehensive

development plan for water resources to secure supply and for flood control. In 2017, RA No. 10969 was signed to exempt farmers owning eight hectares of land or less from paying irrigation service fees (ISF) for water from national or communal irrigation systems.

It is essential that right regulatory measures are in place to ensure that water resources are managed and allocated properly. In reality, agricultural communities thrive on their own, and painting site-specific pictures of how they have been able to come up with sustainable practices on their own. This brief introduces stories shared by participants during the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) held in 2018.

Payment for ecosystem services: How much do we value our resources?

The main questions regarding payment for ecosystem services (PES) is if the amount really encompasses the true value, and is regulating in this way enough to discourage people from doing destructive measures. While discussions on PES are still ongoing, the municipality of Wao in Lanao del Sur already started implementing PES in 2009. Wao is home to 46,000 people, with maize farming as the dominant activity. It has a total land area of almost 37,000 hectares; about 22,000 hectares are natural and managed forests, and some 18,000 hectares are co-managed areas. In 2009, the PES Memorandum of Agreement was signed and implemented, and the local government unit created a special co-management account. The Wao Water District contributes PhP75,000 (US\$1,451) per year as their PES. Other contributing stakeholders include Wao Maradugao Multipurpose Cooperative, Wao United Truck Operators and Drivers Inc., and Wao Mountain Spring Resort among many others. The local government unit then uses the PES fund to finance conservation activities within the landscape.

By implementing a PES system, the municipality is able to ensure domestic and irrigation water supply. They were also able to sustain the MALMAR Irrigation Project that serves more than 10,000 hectares of rice land in Carmen and Pagalongan municipalities, in Cotabato and Maguindanao provinces. They promoted soil and water conservation, specifically by moving from maize-only farming system to including perennial crops like rubber, fruit trees, and endemic wood species. Lastly, there were able to sequester 52,130 tonnes of carbon each year since the PES was implemented.

According to the Wao Municipal Agriculturist Officer, effective implementation requires transparent stakeholder participation, an enabling political will, institutional capacity, and good governance. Currently, the municipality is addressing the challenges of establishing appropriate PES rates, and monitoring forests given their critical location.

It is essential that the right regulatory measures are in place to ensure that water resources are managed and allocated properly.



Working and achieving together: Why don't we involve ourselves?

The Philippine Watershed Management Coalition (PWMC) was established in 1999. It aims to develop the capability to continue transformative education and communication, build multi-stakeholder membership, form strong coalition systems, work towards sustainability, help push for responsive policies and programs, and help restore degraded resources. Currently, the coalition has 726 members, with activities that started as early as 1999 when they started organizing general assemblies and national conferences to widen the discourse on environmental issues, and engage more stakeholders.

In the coming years, it will focus on addressing environmental degradation, disaster risk reduction, and climate change issues pertinent at the local level. The coalition plans to anchor their strategies on the transformation of watershed management science and practice that started more than five decades ago, and to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration to help carry out its programs and projects up to the national level.

In 2019, together with its regional research and development partners, the coalition will conduct a stock taking of existing initiatives, and facilitate a series of regional discussions to identify key milestones, and document lessons learned. It will then develop a series of practitioner notes and related tools, for use by local champions from either government, civil society, business, or other sectors. Ultimately, in 2020, their goal is to start a flagship river basin project pilot, and multiply it to five in 2022. Alongside this, they also plan to strengthen existing communication and knowledge platforms.

Communities at work: Why do we question systems that have worked for generations?

At the global scale and national level, the agriculture sector has taken several paths, using advances in technology and communications to support viable and sustainable options for farmers. However, in contrast to this, indigenous communities hope to retain their own traditional practices.

The muyong system: For the Ifugaos, by the Ifugaos

Ifugao rice terraces are listed as one of Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) globally-important agricultural heritage systems (GIAHS), and is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Found in the Mountain Province Road, the terraces host the rich cultural practices of the Ifugaos. Ifugao comes from the word *ipugo* which means 'people from the hills', and who are believed to be descendants from the Wigan and Bugar peoples.

The Ifugaos are known for their traditional muyong land use system, being an untilled slope covered with timber and fruit trees, rattan, bamboo, palms, and other natural vegetation. Parcels of land are managed by a clan, family, or an individual. Muyong is the Ifugaos' version of agroforestry, where they practice intercropping in case their rice fields do not produce as much as expected. The muyong system is made up of five agro-ecological systems, namely micro-forest (*muyong* or *pinugo*), terraces (*payoh*), creeks and rivers (*wah-el/wangwang*), settlements (*boble*), and swidden (*shifting agriculture*) fields (*habal/Innuman*).

However, they face several challenges. One is that their younger generation sees only the commercial value of their landscape, and they do not appreciate the value of traditions and customs. The Ifugaos are also receiving inappropriate extension advice; they are being advised to plant fast-growing tree species. This later on influences the sustainability of the *muyong* system. There is also the challenge of aligning government efforts, policies, and regulations with the perceptions and cultural practices of the Ifugaos.

The Cadapdapan Rice Terraces and Can-umantad Falls: How can community members be co-managers?

Building of rice terraces in Cadapdapan started in 1968 when one farmer made a contour of his hilly land and constructed canals from a spring and directed it to his farm. From this initiative, the municipality was encouraged to help the barangay by helping to connect them to other agencies, and in 1975 the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) built their first dam. There are now two dams that supply the water requirements of the rice terraces, both managed by local associations. The upper diversion dam managed by Samahang Nayon Association serves 80% of the rice growing areas, while the lower dam managed by the Cadapdapan Irrigators Association supplies the remaining 20% in Cadapdapan, Tambongan, Cambane, and Abihilan barangays.

Local communities in Cadapdapan also became co-managers of the Can-umantad Falls in 2015 when eco-tourism took off in Bohol. With both the rice terraces and the waterfalls, Barangay Cadapdapan is now a lead tourist destination in Bohol. Farmers and the barangay have seen increases in their income, and farmers have also adopted new interventions and practices that they learned from training courses.

At the global scale and national level, the agriculture sector has taken several paths, using advances in technology and communications to support viable and sustainable options for farmers. However, in contrast to this, indigenous communities hope to retain their own traditional practices.

The urgency: How do we go about the sector's complexity?

NED participants have provided several action points, and they also highlighted that the issues and challenges become more complex when triggers and externalities such as climate change and natural hazards are factored in.

Research and development. Local land use plans need updated research that can provide information on soil and biodiversity assessment as basis for improved valuation of PES. Land use plans also need to use documented indigenous knowledge and practices.

Knowledge management. While there are growing needs for more research work on water and agriculture sector, it is another work to maintain an open database where national agencies, and other organizations can go to for updated data and research results.

Environmental impact assessments. These should cover the complete cycle of proposed projects, and provide both immediate and long term impacts to support decision makers as they consider whether to approve, ask for major revisions, or to decline projects.

Working together. The sector is highly fragmented with many agencies and organizations working on their own. The most urgent call is to have a working group out of the existing agencies who can revisit current policies and practices, and come up with integrated water use and distribution plans for the sector.



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FROM RIDGE TO REEF

Anchoring on synergies to implement integrated coastal resource management

Communities and civil society organizations are becoming more proactive in creating new groups and mechanisms to help protect and manage coastal and marine ecosystems.





Introducing the issues at large

Work to effectively manage, protect, and conserve coastal and marine ecosystems started in the 1970s with the first signs of fishery stock depletion and marine habitat degradation. The Philippines developed management plans for an integrated approach to tackle the issues. But challenges increased when other ecosystems from forests to urban areas added negative drivers and pressures, and that all flowed down to the country's coast and seas. In 2006, the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR) adopted integrated coastal management (ICM) as a national strategy to ensure sustainable management through Executive Order (EO) 533. Anchored on holistic, ecosystem-based approaches, the DENR, Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), and Local Government Units (LGUs) are the three bodies in charge of national coastal and fisheries management.


Coastal and marine ecosystem management requires continuous efforts that also evolve over time. Learning events serve as new starting points, and the sustainability of environmental management approaches rely on how grounded they can be seen below.

There are many lessons learnt from the following rich examples of how communities can bring desired sustainable practices to life and inspire succeeding generations. From this work, four themes emerged and that have been prioritized for enhancing national integrated coastal resource management practices. These are: (i) political will and legal instruments; (ii) organizational structures; (iii) multi-stakeholder participation; and (iv) capacities and financial instruments.

GOVERNMENT MANDATES AT WORK

Case I - the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources, Biodiversity Management Bureau (DENR-BMB)

Mandated to conserve, manage, promote the wise use, and develop the country's environmental and natural resources, DENR-BMB is strengthening the implementation of ICM, specifically through its Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program (CMEMP). This program is reaping the harvest of ICM by dealing with fragmented project implementation, sectoral management approaches, and low community ownership.



CMEMP is the country's strategy to improve the condition, and the functions and services provided by coastal and marine ecosystems. It has seven interconnected components: 1) Marine Protected Area (MPA) network establishment and strengthening; 2) Biodiversity-friendly and social enterprise development; 3) Capacity building; 4) Technical assistance; 5) Knowledge management; 6) Social marketing and mobilization; and 7) Monitoring and evaluation.

In addition to mainstreaming connectivity through Marine Protected Areas, CMEMP uses supporting scientific evidence, also conducting baseline surveys and comprehensive habitat assessments of selected coastal and marine ecosystems. Through such monitoring and explorations, the Guidelines on Assessment of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems manual was produced. Moreover, CMEMP contributed in securing a Presidential Proclamation declaring the Philippine Rise marine area as an ecologically significant area, and continues conducting collaborative marine scientific research there.

Coastal and marine ecosystem management requires continuous efforts that also evolve over time.

Case II – the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR)

With the mandate to develop, improve, manage, and conserve national fisheries and aquatic resources, DA-BFAR contributes through concrete strategies. One means is by implementing multiple use zones for specific coastal or marine areas that provide protection measures against human activities that may impose pressure on ecosystems. Another is through regulation to control the number of people who can fish in certain areas, when they can fish, methods allowed, and species that can be harvested.

Other interventions include mobilizing networks of marine protected areas, declaration of fish sanctuaries, development of land area management protocols, temporary closure of fishing grounds, and promoting supplemental livelihood strategies. A further role is providing financial support through joint funding and incentives for implementing best practices, as well as allocating grant funds from international, non-government and academic institutions.

DENR-BMB also partners with BFAR to conduct joint assessments, conservation and protection of freshwater ecosystems and resources, and enforcement of relevant laws and regulations. Together, they also conduct public education and communication activities, assist in developing biodiversity-friendly enterprises, and provide capacity strengthening. This has all helped overcome a common challenge in addressing environmental issues, which is bringing together different agencies and disciplines and facilitating them to create and implement holistic strategies.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES AT WORK

Case III – the Lanuza Bay Development Alliance (LBDA), Surigao del Sur

The Alliance implements effective management mechanisms, and is currently composed of seven municipalities that share jurisdiction of Lanuza Bay (Carrascal, Cantilan, Madrid, Carmen, Lanuza, Cortes, and Tandag). It takes pride in having both the Bay-wide Environmental Management Framework Plan and the Bay-wide Coastal Zoning Scheme adopted by the LGUs. It also received a grant from the European Commission to formulate a Forest Land Use Plan. Parallel to these efforts was the harmonization of a comprehensive fisheries and aquatic resources management ordinance that provided a uniform schedule of payments of fees and penalties for violations based on the resource value system.

The Bay now boasts 17 marine protected areas with more on the way. To strengthen implementation, monitoring and evaluation, the Alliance has also formed three supporting bodies, the Municipal Enforcement Action Team, Special Enforcement Action Team, and Provincial Coastal Law Enforcement Coordinating Council. It is proactive, such as assisting the development of protected areas through programs like the Bay-wide Tourism Cluster Planning Workshop, Bay-wide Solid Waste Management Planning, and Proposed Clustered Sanitary Landfill. The alliance has truly become a home of champions. Cortes municipality was recently presented with the *Masagana at Malinis na Karagatan* (Plentiful and Clean Seas) award, and its area managers are regular finalists for the MSN Para el Mar awards.

The Alliance has a number of achievements to celebrate, but recognizes there are still rooms for improvement. It sees the need to define the structure and function for the council and its operations center, the need to develop learning focused on behavioural change, and to explore further funding from national and international agencies. The Alliance also highlights the challenge of developing a monitoring and evaluation plan to specify performance indicators, parameters, and implementation gaps.

Case IV – Batangas Marine Protected Area and the Bantay Dagat Network

This marine protected area was established in November 2007, covering 15 coastal municipalities around Batangas, Lipa and Tanuan cities, and Balayan Bay, Batangas Bay, and Tayabas Bay. The Bay's Bantay Dagat Network members formed the Batangas Resource Assessment Knights of the Ocean (BaRAKO) Team to conduct reef surveys, establish permanent monitoring sites, install protected area boundary markers, and establish mangrove conservation areas. The members of the Bantay Dagat Network receive capacity strengthening and technical assistance that provide new spaces to co-create strategies, enhance understanding,

as well as participate in action planning workshops, training programs on marine mammal and turtle rescue and management, and seminars on developing conservation frameworks for wider areas.

The Network ensures that members are updated with new strategies on climate change adaptation, improving planting, mapping, monitoring, and validating their mangrove rehabilitation and conservation projects. An exchange visit to Bohol allowed learning on community-based mangrove management led the team to the formulation of a mangrove management plan. The network also took time to discuss with commercial fishers and found that there is declining fish catch, competitions on fishing grounds, and no regulation that limits the number of fishing boats, thus the need to travel further to get a good catch. Through the discussion, the fishers mentioned that they were open to the possibility of implementing a seasonal closure of areas to fishing.

Case V – Zamboanga Sibugay: Kapunungan sa Gagmay'ng Mangingisda sa Concepcion (KGMC)

Created in 1986, this organization based in Brgy. Concepcion, Kabasalan, Zamboang Sibugay currently has 321 household members. Given that KGMC is still a small organization, it is already operating in eight coastal communities, it focuses on mangrove restoration and rehabilitation, protection of marine environment and biodiversity, and promotion of coastal community social enterprises. KGMC implements its programs and advocacies through the strength of partnerships with Xavier Agriculture Extension Service Foundation Inc. (XAES), Forest Foundation Philippines, Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE), HEED Fi, and various national and local government and academic institutions.

Their programs are built on three major pillars: environment, livelihood, and social empowerment. Environment programs focus on mangrove rehabilitation and protection, through entering into co-management agreement with DENR and creating task groups to ensure coastal areas are pollution-free and that offenders can be easily apprehended. One of their banner livelihood programs is Small Enterprise for Community Assistance Project (SECAP), with activities on fishing, seaweed farming, and marine product processing. Maintenance and expansion of enterprise is through a joint venture (patak-patak) mechanism that provide seed capital to jumpstart aquaculture and enterprises on snapper/seabass, crabs, lobster, and grouper production. The venture entails 80% of net income to repay the seed capital, while 20% is used for management of social enterprises.

The empowerment pillar focuses on strengthening of fisherfolk organizations. KGMC established a Coastal Resource Management Information and Training Center through the assistance from multiple partners. The Center was used for conducting capacity strengthening activities on environmental protection and enterprise development

and management, bookkeeping, financial and project management and sustainability. To ensure sustainability, KGMC also invests in preparing the next generation, with youth members encouraged to join coastal cleanup activities; and at household level, education on the importance of coastal resource management and sustainable fishing.

MOVING FORWARD

1. Political will and legal instruments

To ensure that sustainable strategies and practices will be implemented over the long term, there is a need to complement legal instruments with up-to-date monitoring and assessment data. The above cases highlight efforts to begin baseline studies and continue monitoring and evaluation activities. In Batangas (Case IV) for example, local governments used monitoring efforts to implement a seasonal commercial fishing closure in Balayin, Talin, and Nasugbu bays. This was backed by commercial fishers because they had already reported declining fish catches and excessive competition from an unlimited number of fishing boats.

Policy recommendation - include the area of municipal waters when calculating Internal Revenue Allotments (IRAs).

2. Organizational structures

Effective structures for coastal resource management remain a challenge, along with a need to set clear functions of the various agencies involved. But much can be learnt from experiences of local networks in mobilizing groups and individuals, for example how KGMC (Case V) adopted business and financial models to organize its members and other involved groups. The key learning point for establishing and sustaining structures is to build on the organization's purpose, and on community needs and capabilities. To support environment-friendly livelihoods and enterprises, KGMC created a sustainable structure that tapped the potential of communities and enhanced their capacities by involving them in various stages of their business models, from catching to becoming local distributors.

Policy recommendation - it is important to meet the needs and enhance capacities of communities to sustain organizational structures on the local level.



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FINDING WAYS TO WORK
TOGETHER

**Creatively addressing
complex environmental issues**

Together. At this point in the discourse of landscape governance, together is an overly used term to state how government and stakeholders should be working to achieve common goals. Together can also be a hardly harnessed strategy for moving commitments and actions in the necessary directions.

On a policy level, multi-stakeholder management is well embedded in various laws and provisions. These include the 1987 Constitution, Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act (R.A.) No. 7160), National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 (R.A. 7586), among many others. But a challenge remains, regarding the reality of working together in practice. This brief puts together the experiences of the participants of the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) who have long worked in, and for, their landscapes, but who still see areas of improvement to maximize the potential of working in synergy.



Challenges of working together

It is easier to say how to work together, than it is to confront challenges that hinder people and organizations to really work together. One challenge is the political context in a given scenario or landscape, as political will plays a major role in creating and pushing for healthy environments for people to work together. Another is the customary practice of changing local leadership after three years, which poses a challenge to long term planning and maintaining the functions of multi-stakeholder platforms.

Overlaps. In some situations, there are controversial geographical areas that municipalities fight over, so instead of creating a space to work together, they each end up working on their own. There may also be overlap in the roles and functions of agencies and members. On a national level, how many agencies have the mandate to work towards

protecting, conserving, and managing the country's environmental and natural resources? Although their mandates vary in magnitude and scale, overlap causes difficulty among national and local agencies in integrating efforts on operations, extension, or research.

Regularity. Maintaining regular representatives for platforms is another challenge, advances are limited because there is low and slow continuity of discourses among members.

Research. There is inadequate up-to-date research on certain problem areas. One case emphasizes production of shared risk assessments that stakeholders can use as they craft their updated management plans. Instead of looking together into a given risk, they proceed on their own to search for available data and information that they can easily and readily use.

The challenges of creating and nurturing multi-stakeholder management platforms are distributed in the spectrum—from the national government, local government units, civil society organizations (CSOs), and local communities.



Learning together: Experiences and existing platforms we can learn from

While the challenges can be overwhelming, experiences from those who have started and continued the practice of working together are equally inspiring. Existing multi-stakeholder platforms vary in geographic scope and binding instruments, but they work together for common resource issues. To achieve their goals, they have shared approaches such as conservation of water resources, integrated coastal management, and joint fisheries management. They achieve milestones together with co-managers including provincial government, local government units, academic institutions, CSOs, barangays, and the private sector.



CSOs also have multi-stakeholder initiatives, including Guiuan Recovery and Sustainable Development Group for Resiliencies, Allah Valley Landscape Development Alliance, Tañon Strait Protected Seascape, and Lamesa Watershed Reservation Multisectoral Management Council. These platforms engage with other sectors such as academic institutions, religious groups, indigenous peoples, and the private sector.



What enables an effective multi-stakeholder platform?

The first enabling factor is to ensure that each participating member or organization has a **clear understanding of the platform's goals** that provide directions, and help prioritize the roads to take, and decisions to make.

It is also crucial for any platform to have **government support at both national and local level**. This increases the likelihood of the platform's programs and projects being mainstreamed in regular governmental activities even on the onset, or after a program ends. Another equally important facet of any platform is the commitment of both its members and stakeholders to fully participate in activities and discussions, and provide feedback regarding interventions being carried out. All commitments need to be channeled through regular spaces for discourses, meetings, and workshops, where members can provide inputs on how to steer the group and its stakeholders.



Any platform must also build on science-based evidence to support their goals and activities. Platforms must be proactive in developing and sustaining relationships with academic universities or other research partners, to ensure that the platform is updated with research activities in their landscapes, as inputs to their lobbying and advocacy activities.

Lastly, platforms also need **binding instruments and sustainable financing**. Binding instruments are determined by the needs and legal requirements of the involved parties. Sustainable financing is possible when the platform is supported by long term funding, or long term finance-supporting activities.

One challenge is the political context, because it plays a major role in creating and pushing for healthy environments for people to work together.



Eight principles for engaging multiple stakeholders in natural resource management

While there is no universal way to guarantee successful multi-stakeholder engagement, organizations can learn from these eight principles to ensure that stakeholders engage at every step of their respective journeys.

1. Build on the current state of the ecosystem.

This implies multi-stakeholder participation and management can be more effective if they directly respond to current ecosystems needs.

2. Find a catalyst of environmental change.

Catalysts are essential in pushing for environmental change. Their participation in the development process is crucial, not only as additional actors, but also as individuals with genuine concern and vision for enhanced management practices.

4. Empower natural resource managers.

Communities and individuals should not only be considered as resource users, but also as resource managers. This implies that they should be capacitated with technical skills, and are also given opportunities to provide inputs in discourses on natural resource management.

5. Nurture good governance in natural resource management.

Creating multi-stakeholder management platforms helps nurture good governance, with inspirations from group dynamics with voluntary participation, transparency, and accountability.

6. Strengthen linkages with various stakeholders.

Environmental challenges occur at various levels. Some are greater at the national level, others at a local level. Multi-stakeholder platforms must strengthen multi-levels of linkages and participation, and local communities must be well-represented, alongside provincial, regional, and national members.

7. Implement a biodiversity and ecosystem services monitoring system.

The Philippines can already implement numerous conservation efforts, but without a reliable biodiversity and ecosystems monitoring system in place, it can only assume as to how collective efforts create impacts and changes in the field.

8. Implement integrated approaches for natural resource management.

More than just bringing together stakeholders from various sectors, platform members must also ensure that they carefully design an integrated approach or framework for natural resource management.

There is no universal way to guarantee successful multi-stakeholder engagement.



Moving forward: Together is the only way

As environmental issues are ever-present and growing in nature, working together is the only way to address them. **Platforms must evolve as complex structures** that can strengthen processes of working together.

Another urgent aspect is the need to **link research with platforms**, and eventually to local stakeholders. Making research usable in various forms and levels rests not only with researchers, but also with all stakeholders. Platforms can facilitate this, strategizing together on how to best use research results to help communities, to strengthen adaptation and mitigation plans and measures in local management plans, and to rethink and re-design the implementation of environmental management programs and projects.

Finally, multi-stakeholder platforms can **explore the possibilities provided by online platforms** such as knowledge portals, open data, collaborative database, and decision support systems and tools. These provide real-time access to data and information that can help update strategies and plans.

While challenges in implementing and sustaining multi-stakeholder platforms keep growing, the need and the call for creativity in nurturing them also continue to grow. Thus, it is high time to explore and cross the boundaries of limitations and customary practices.



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A man in a red shirt is watering plants in a greenhouse. The greenhouse has a thatched roof made of dried palm leaves. The plants are green and leafy. The man is holding a black watering can and is watering the plants. The background shows more of the greenhouse structure and some trees outside.

**STATUS OF RECENT AND
PENDING LAWS**

**Green bills and enabling
mechanisms for sustainable
landscape governance**

Discourse on landscape governance is made more complex when pending bills and laws are drawn to the surface, alongside the clamor of various stakeholders for sustainable development. This brief discusses the currently pending and recently enacted green bills and environmental codes that help shift the country's sectoral operations to an integrated one.

The National Land Use Act (NLUA)

NLUA is a priority act for strengthening integration of existing land use plans and policies. With increasing population shifting priorities to urban areas, there is a need to rethink how to better allocate and use lands, and NLUA offers a clear framework. It aims to institutionalize planning and determine and evaluate appropriate land use allocation patterns. To implement this, a National Physical Framework Plan will provide the basis for development, built on a 30-year ridge-to-reef planning framework with regular reviews and decadal updating of land use protection and production, and settlement and infrastructure development.

However, NLUA supporters face several challenges. One is to implement a strategy to increase awareness and gather support to promote the urgency of passing the bill into law. Another is to engage the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and provide timely and evidence-based strategies to those parties who continuously challenge the proposed act.

The Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Bill

SFM Bill focuses on adopting a strategy based on rational allocation of forest land uses, promotion of practices to increase forest productivity, and policies and enabling mechanisms to protect and rehabilitate forests. In the House of Representatives, it has been forwarded through several filed House Bills (50, 1213 and 1171). At the Senate level, Bill 402 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources; but there has been no further deliberation.

In 2018, new provisions and highlights have been included, such as scope and coverage of forest lands and resources, untitled agricultural land, private land, civil and military reservations, and areas managed by other government agencies or government units. Challenges include pursuance and implementation, including delineation and demarcation of forests.

The Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (ENIPAS)

Republic Act 11038 (ENIPAS) was enacted in July 2018. It strengthens protective measures, adding 94 legislated protected areas. Areas and boards include the Philippine Rise Marine Resource Reserve, the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), the Protected Area Management Office (PAMO), the Biodiversity Management Bureau, whilst also allowing renewable energy development, providing wider coverage of prohibited acts, imposing higher fines and penalties, and emphasizing administrative and criminal liabilities of local government amongst others. ENIPAS includes amendments in the 24-year old NIPAS Act, and also provides amendments in allowing management boards to declare buffer zones.


To improve the planning structure and framework, ENIPAS requires a formulated management plan within a year of establishment of a protected area, integrated into the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), Ancestral Domains Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP), and other local plans. ENIPAS has provisions on sections of the PAMO tax exemptions, rights, tenured migrants and other occupants, facilities and special uses within the area, site-specific legislation, and joint congressional oversight committees.

As a transitory provision, the Department for Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) shall cease to issue concessions, licenses, permits, clearances, compliance documents or other instruments that allow utilization of resources within a protected area until a management plan has been put into effect. Furthermore, all existing land use and resource use permits shall be reviewed, and shall not be renewed upon their expiration unless consistent with the management plan and approved by the PAMB.

**"Nothing about us without us"
Indigenous peoples call decision-makers to
include them in the discourse, as no policy
should be enacted without them.**



Alternative Minerals Management Bill



In 2016, mining industry employed almost 29,000 Filipinos, with about a fifth each in Davao, Caraga, and Cordillera Administrative Region. With the increasing contribution of mining to employment and economy, it is imperative that lawmakers look more closely into these activities, and put policies in place to ensure that environment and natural resources will not be compromised and exploited to an unallowable level.

There are major developments in pushing for mining law bills. At the 17th Congress, three House Bills were filed for a Philippine Mineral Resources Act. A House Bill has also been filed to have a Peoples Mining Act. On the senate level, Senate Bill 1069 was filed for an Alternative Minerals Management Act, with four core principles, to: (i) support industrialization and increase taxes, (ii) protect the environment, (iii) involve communities as part of all decisions; and (iv) penalize human rights violations and environmental damage. The bill further proposes to add 14 more 'no-go' mining zones, in addition to the seven specified in RA 7042. It also proposes an increase in the government share from 4% to 10%, and 10% royalties for indigenous peoples. While this and other House Bills on mining have already been proposed, the biggest challenge is to prioritize them in light of a pending charter change.




Indigenous Community Conserved Areas Bill

This bill covers ancestral domains or lands identified, protected, conserved and sustainably used by indigenous peoples, following their indigenous knowledge systems, practices and customary laws. Several were filed during the 17th Congress. These included HB 115 in June 2016 by the Committee on Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Communities, passed in January 2018 after a series of Technical Working Group meetings, and currently under review by the House of Representatives appropriation committee.

It emphasizes indigenous peoples' rights to their ancestral domains and practices, and as these become more open to development projects, communities must be capacitated to negotiate via free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). It also provides another layer of protection with the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 (RA No. 8371).

Indigenous peoples were involved in dialogues advocating for the bill, and this helped build their confidence in speaking for themselves, and also in building consensus among concerned communities and stakeholders. Revising the bill helped communities to identify and work on indigenous knowledge and realities on the ground. Advocacy work also helped them promote the working principle of "nothing about us without us," to ensure complementarity with related bills pending in congress, and identify policy options if this bill is not passed into a law.





The Philippine Environment Code

Enacted in June 1977, Presidential Decree No. 1152 provides management policies and quality standards for comprehensive program of environmental protection and management. It also establishes environment management policies, and prescribed environmental quality standards that promote social and economic development of the country.

Some provinces that have implemented their local environmental codes include Batangas City, South Cotabato, and Misamis Occidental. Some of the highlights of their environmental codes include:

Batangas City (2010)

The city specified the creation of a City Environment Council and a City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO). Their environmental code also specifies closing of open dump sites, and constructing a sanitary landfill.

South Cotabato (2010)

Their environmental code specified the creation of the South Cotabato Watershed Network, and the institutionalization of a Provincial Inland Freshwater Resources Management Framework and a Provincial Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Review Committee. In addition, their environmental code also specified the ban of the use of open-pit mining.

Misamis Occidental (2016)

They implemented an environmental code that recognized ancestral domains for the first time. It also institutionalized customary laws, prohibiting large- and small-scale mining and implementing no-go mining zones.

These provincial regulations still need to address challenges such as insufficient resources to implement provisions, monitor and review implementation, and ensure an information and educational learning design to educate the general public about the provisions in their environmental codes.

Sustaining the momentum for improving green bills and policies

Policies to support effective management of natural resources are in place, but it is critical to create a policy sphere where green bills are developed and improved on the basis of technical validity and political feasibility. These should then be put forward to ensure behavioral transformation of people and organizations, and the institutionalization of proposed bills in the bureaucratic process.

Participants of the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) 2018 put forward six recommendations to enhance the facilitation of green bills and policies:

- (i) Ensure active stakeholder participation in crafting ENIPAS implementing rules and regulations.**
- (ii) Craft a political map to identify champions and allies to guide and support the development of legislative advocacy strategies.**
- (iii) Localize strategies and policy options.**
- (iv) Continue pushing for green bills to maintain discourse running in the legislative levels.**
- (v) Involve academic institutions in discussions and forming of policy positions and recommendations.**
- (vi) Maintain regular dialogues to develop unified platforms for interactions and exchange of learning experiences.**

Policies to support effective management of natural resources are in place, but it is critical to create a policy sphere where green bills are continuously developed and improved on the basis of technical validity and political feasibility.



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PAVING PATHWAYS FOR
SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Focus on energy shift to renewable sources



According to the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP), the current challenges of meeting the needs of the Philippine cities without harming forest resources and later impact climate are design, governance, and knowledge. The country's cities are designed to consume more without considering its interdependence with their natural environment. This can be topped even more by increasing population. On governance level, there needs to be a more holistic and proactive coordination within and among different cities. There is also the challenge of pooling knowledge and experts to effectively tackle specific barriers to achieve urban environmental sustainability. Participants of the National Environmental Dialogue (NED) held in July 2018 pinpointed the energy sector as an integrating aspect in tackling the challenges of building sustainable cities as a significant component to a more holistic and inclusive governance of our natural resources.

To address these challenges, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) developed a roadmap to a socially-just energy transition. CCC's national roadmap emphasizes the need to: 1) have an integrated energy system planning; 2) focus on renewable energy development; 3) work towards energy efficiency and conservation; and 4) implement regulations on conventional electricity generation technologies. All these lead to achieving the goal that by 2050, the Philippines already benefits from 100% share of renewable energy and indigenous sources in the energy mix; and that the country has already stopped coal importation.

In 2016, solar energy growth was larger than any form of energy generation. Since 2009, the cost of solar and wind energy in the country has dropped by 90% and 50%, respectively. Comparing this development in solar energy prices, coal prices increased from less than PhP2,600 (USD50) in early 2016 to more than PhP5,200 (USD100) in 2018. At this point, coal as a source of energy does not only pose a question on affordability, but also questions on environmental sustainability. The good thing is that on regional and community levels, people have started to re-design their cities.

Lights at the end of the tunnel: Stories from regions that have started the shift

The Case of Cagayan de Oro City: Building back better

In 2012, Cagayan de Oro was hit by typhoon Sendong (Washi). After the typhoon, the city took the impacts on different levels; more than 38,000 families, and almost 230,000 individuals were affected. There were 674 and 396 reported deaths and missing people, respectively. Impacts to agriculture, infrastructure, houses, and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) shot up to PhP58M, PhP775M, PhP944M, and PhP190M, respectively. The disaster led the local governments and the community to rethink their concept of resilience; they steered their efforts to build back better.

Alongside their collective efforts to build back better, the city has also been evolving as an emerging metropolitan city. From 2016 to 2017, it had 136% increase in new investments, and 33% increase in new businesses. Since 2013, it has been included in the top 10 most competitive highly urbanized cities.

Cagayan de Oro balances both challenges and opportunities. Some of its challenges include increasing rate of number of vehicles (42.5% from 2001 to 2015). The city also had a 20.23% increase in electricity consumption just from 2014 to 2016. On knowledge and practice level, many of its community members cannot see the relationship between their energy use and climate change, and other environmental issues.

One of the accomplishments of the city is that it declared a city shift to LED street lights, and it eventually resulted to reduced street light electricity consumption by 5.11% from 2014 to 2017. On a household level, the city is also looking into the opportunity of promoting the sustainable use of fuelwood and other biomass residues for cooking and other purposes. Based on a focus group discussion (FGD) conducted by the city members, a good number of the community representatives already use fuelwood for cooking.

As a call to action, Cagayan de Oro city invites more CSOs to engage government and businesses in their efforts, and work towards people empowerment in terms of providing people with access to renewable resources.

Coal as a source of energy does not only pose a question on affordability, but also questions on environmental sustainability.





The Case of Tacloban City: Energy resiliency and energy transition

Tacloban City takes pride in being the premier city of Eastern Visayas. It is the gateway of trade into the region, and it is also the center of commerce, industry, education, communication, and technology. However, in 2013, Tacloban was struck by typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), which not only impeded the city's growth, but wreaked havoc in most of Tacloban's local communities. This was one of the major challenges that the city had to consider in designing their energy resiliency plan. In 2015, the total consumption of Tacloban City was 102,909MW; their energy sources were geothermal, coal, and fuel. Majority (54.49%) of their energy consumption comes from residential uses, followed by industrial (18.35%), and commercial (17.25%). As a response, the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC) started its Solar Scholars Program which highlights the use of and transition to renewable energy sources. The program installed solar-powered water pumps in three communities in San Jose, Tacloban City.

Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities (ICSC) also notes the importance and challenge to involve and empower communities in the process. Citizens must consider themselves as investors and as integral part of sustaining the energy shift from traditional to renewable sources.

Designing sustainable resettlement sites:

Implementing the total energy access approach

A total of 14,951 households, with approximately 74,755 people, will be transferred to new resettlement sites. One of the resettlement sites is Pope Francis Village (PFV); it is designed to house 550 families. PFV has designed the resettlement site to implement the total energy access approach. Total energy access approach has four major premises: 1) recognize energy needs across home, work, and community; 2) measure energy services; 3) prioritize and adequately finance decentralized solutions; and 4) acknowledge the roles of government, private sector, and civil society in achieving the total energy access goals. PFV co-developed energy plans together with community members, and came up with energy roadmaps for electricity, cooking, transportation, and water. PFV designed their houses to source water and power from the rooftops. The houses were built with an average roof area of 40m²; with the annual average rainfall in Tacloban of 90.3 inches, the total rainwater collection potential can amount to 90,690 liters or 91.5 bulk water tanks in a year. The roofs will also be installed with eight 250 watts solar panels.

ICSC provided few points on how to improve working together to achieve the city's goal of energy resiliency and transition. ICSC specified the importance of involving the private and finance sectors, especially in terms of designing mechanisms on how to make renewable energy sources affordable. On the level of local government units (LGU), the LGUs need to provide an enabling environment for energy transition projects, and for efficient permitting processes.

ICSC also notes the importance and challenge to involve and empower communities in the process. Citizens must consider themselves as investors, and as integral part of sustaining the energy shift from traditional to renewable sources. Lastly, ICSC calls state universities and colleges (SUCs) to be involved in the movement, specifically by doing applied research works on sustaining renewable energy sources, and by coming up with cost-efficient innovations.

Paving the pathways to sustainable cities

The country is targeting to achieve clean air, green jobs, green growth, and a balance between industrialization and sustainable development in 2040. To achieve all these, the national government must work hand in hand with regional partners and local communities. Commitment from various sectors such as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and academic institutions must be in place to engage the government in creation of policies and projects that will enable further exploration on mainstreaming the use of renewable energy in the country. Likewise, with private sectors as partners. Specifically, on policy reform level, the NED participants mentioned that **the government must put in place a more comprehensive review for permitting purposes of green buildings, and renewable energy projects.**

To enhance strategies and approach, participants specified that research works on energy efficiency must be in place - **especially energy hybridization for small islands.** They also mentioned the need to **strengthen the advocacy work on green architecture, and to explore more and diverse financing opportunities.** On enforcement and implementation level, participants specified that cities must include in their **environmental codes to have polluters pay** whenever they violate any regulation, and that there must be continuous lobbying and advocacy work to help push for effective implementation of laws and regulations.



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