

Kimangkil – Kalanawan – Sumagaya – Pamalihi (KKSP)



Area:
72,000
hectares

Administrative units:
Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon

Background

The Kimmangkil – Kalanawan – Sumagaya – Pamalihi (KKSP) landscape is a large, ecologically and culturally significant mountain landscape in Northern Mindanao, spanning parts of Misamis Oriental and Bukidnon. The KKSP refers to a connected mountain range and Ancestral Domain (AD) complex composed of four major components: Mt. Kimmangkil, Kalanawan AD, Mt. Sumagaya, and Pamalihi AD.

Together, these areas form an integrated landscape that is both geographically continuous and culturally unified, managed and inhabited mainly by the Higaonon Indigenous Peoples (IPs). Ecologically, it encompasses extensive forested mountains and watershed systems that sustain biodiversity, water resources, and Indigenous livelihood systems.

The KKSP landscape currently faces the following threats:

- Deforestation and habitat loss: Timber poaching and expanding agricultural activity (such as plantation expansion) negatively impact forests that shelter many plants and animals, reducing biodiversity in the long term.
- Weak enforcement of forest protection laws: Gaps in law enforcement, coupled with ongoing pressures from land conversion, leave the area increasingly vulnerable to biodiversity loss.
- Extractive and intrusive projects: Development aggression (including mining and other extractive industries) threatens the integrity of the ADs.

Ecosystem Functions & Services

Community-led forest management and ecosystem-based initiatives in the KKSP landscape highlight the interplay between Indigenous cultural heritage and ecological resilience, which together form the foundation of the landscape's ecological integrity.



Provisioning services

The KKSP landscape encompasses extensive forested areas that provide timber and non-timber forest products—including materials for housing, tools, traditional uses, and food—that contribute to local subsistence and livelihoods. The KKSP landscape's forest cover also acts as a massive natural sponge, filtering sediments and ensuring a stable, clean water supply for downstream ecosystems and communities.



Regulating services

The KKSP landscape's forest cover acts as a carbon sink, helping moderate local and regional climate impacts. They also work to protect critical watersheds by regulating water flows, preventing soil erosion, and reducing sediment runoff, helping maintain ecological stability throughout the landscape.



Economic products

The raw materials for traditional *hinabol* (handwoven fabric) made by Indigenous weavers are sourced from Abacá (*Musa textilis*) grown in the area. Rattan and vines are also nurtured and collected for processing, while food products, such as wild honey, are sustainably harvested from giant honey bees (*Apis dorsata*) in the forests, supporting local livelihoods.



Supporting services

Dense forest canopy and deep root systems stabilize steep and vulnerable mountain slopes in the area, which acts as a crucial habitat and high-conservation-value area for threatened Philippine flora and fauna. The KKSP landscape's various bodies of water and vegetation also maintain the hydrologic cycle by intercepting rainfall, facilitating groundwater recharge, and supplying water to agricultural lands within and in downstream areas.



Cultural value

The KKSP landscape forms part of the AD of the Higaonon IPs, whose cultural identity, traditions, and way of life are deeply intertwined with the forests, mountains, and watersheds in the area. Traditional practices such as *panlaoy*, a community-led forest monitoring system rooted in Higaonon knowledge and customary practices, enable local communities to regularly assess forest conditions and identify potential threats to natural resources within the area. By facilitating the early detection of environmental disturbances, *panlaoy* contributes to the long-term maintenance of ecosystem integrity across the landscape.





Key Projects Supported by Forest Foundation Philippines

Project 1:

STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE KIMANGKIL KALANAWAN SUMAGAYA PAMALIHI (KKSP) LANDSCAPE



Grantee:
NTFP-EP
Philippines



Project Duration:
2023–2026 (3 years)



Project Amount:
Forest Foundation
Fund:
PHP 16,958,000
Counterpart Fund:
PHP 1,320,000



Project Summary:

The project builds on the Foundation's earlier efforts in the KKSP landscape to strengthen Indigenous governance for the sustainable management of forests and livelihood approaches. The KKSP is ecologically critical, hosting major watersheds, rich biodiversity, and sacred mountains and sanctuaries, all managed under Indigenous beliefs and agreements among IP communities such as the Mintapod Declaration.

It focuses on empowering Higaonon Indigenous communities across multiple ADs by reinforcing Indigenous Political Structures (IPS), integrating Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plans (ADSDPPs) into local development plans, and strengthening forest protection through Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSPs), while aligning with a science-based decision-making process.

The project is implemented through four interconnected components covering forest governance, biodiversity conservation and climate action, sustainable livelihoods, and knowledge management, all of which collectively support Indigenous-led forest stewardship and long-term ecological resilience. With this, community-based forest monitoring, such as *panlaoy*, and community-based enterprises from forest products such as cinnamon, citronella, bamboo, and coffee are strengthened as a sustainable forest management strategy. Documentation and sharing of lessons learned on sustainable forest management and Indigenous-led conservation practices also support the communities as they undergo readiness towards results-based payments for forest conservation schemes.

Project 2:

PILOTING REDD+ IN THE KIMANGKIL KALANAWAN SUMAGAYA PAMALIHI (KKSP) LANDSCAPE



Grantee:
NTFP-EP
Philippines



Project Duration:
2017–2020 (3 years)



Project Amount:
Forest Foundation Fund:
PHP 6,198,992
Counterpart Fund:
PHP 1,115,000

Project Summary:

The project focused on community preparedness towards Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) in the KKSP landscape in Bukidnon and Misamis Oriental. It sustained and expanded efforts to reduce deforestation and forest degradation by strengthening Indigenous governance and improving sustainable livelihoods in the area.

It was implemented across five ADs, including the Agtulawon-Mintapod Higaonon Cumadon (AGMIHICU) in Barangay Hagpa, Impasug-ong; Kalanawan Ancestral Domain in the Siloo Ananggi Itoy Amosig Higaonon Tribal Community (Kalanawan SAIA) and Itoy Amosig Higaonon Tribal Community Organization (IAHTCO) in Barangay San Luis, Malitbog; the Bal-ason Higaonon People Organization (BHPO) in Barangay Bal-ason, Gingoog City; the Pamalihi community's Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) in Barangay Samay, Balingasag; and Mat-i, Man-ibay, Civoleg, Langguyod Higaonon Tribal Community (MAMACILA) in Barangays of Mat-i and Aposkahoy in Claveria and Barangays of Lunotan and Libertad in Gingoog City. These communities are part of Higaonon ancestral territories that are ecologically significant and governed through both customary systems and emerging formal arrangements.

The project had three main thrusts: Indigenous forest governance, enhancing community understanding of REDD+, and sustainable livelihoods. It supported the review and enhancement of ADSDPPs, strengthened IPS, and built partnerships with government agencies to support Indigenous participation in forest governance. It also piloted assessments on forest carbon and biodiversity in Mt. Pamalihi and Mt. Sumagaya, in collaboration with local academic partners.

Project 3:

ENABLING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN MTS. BALATUKAN AND CABULIG WATERSHED TO PROTECT, CONSERVE, AND MONITOR THEIR FOREST AND BIODIVERSITY



Grantee:
MAMACILA Apo
Ginopakan Higaonon
Tribal Council



Project Duration:
2016–2017 (1 year)



Project Amount:
Forest Foundation Fund:
PHP 1,961,600
Counterpart Fund:
PHP 198,000

Project Summary:

The project supported the Higaonon tribe of Claveria, Misamis Oriental, through the MAMACILA Apo Ginopakan Higaonon Tribal Council, in efforts to protect their AD and restore degraded forestlands. The initiative strengthened Indigenous forest protection systems by revitalizing the Bantay Kalasan, who were selected through customary rites and recognized as part of the IPS, to conduct forest monitoring, patrolling, and enforcement. They were provided with culturally appropriate uniforms and tools, and their role was institutionalized through collaboration with the municipal Local Government Unit (LGU) of Claveria and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), resulting in annual budget support from the LGU.

The project also established native tree nurseries and supported tree-growing activities in degraded areas, including planting nitrogen-fixing species, such as Erythrina, as nurse trees for abaca production. The project also supported abaca fiber production and processing, a key livelihood source for the community. In addition, the potential of cinnamon as an alternative forest-based livelihood was explored, given the presence of natural cinnamon stands within the AD.

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