INDONESIA: FORESTRY IN TRANSITION

Forest of Pasir District on the border of South Kalimantan

Edited from Advocating for Community-Based Forest Management in Indonesia’s Outer Islands: Political and legal constraints and opportunities by Sandra Moniaga

Much has been reported regarding the changes occurring in Indonesia’s civil society. However, if no substantial policy changes occur in areas critical to the country’s economic dynamics, no long-term paradigm shift will take place. Community forest management, which is seemingly never considered as an official option within the Indonesian context, could therefore be the fulcrum for broader, sustained change. Prior to the mid-1960s, the Indonesian forestry sector emphasised the extraction of timber from government plantations in Java. At the beginning of President Suharto’s administration, the New Order in 1966, forestry institutions were completely reorganised, and the Basic Forestry Law (BFL) No.5/1967 was ratified.

With this law, which was based on the 1945 Constitution, the Government claimed ownership of 113 million hectares of Indonesia’s Outer Islands (nearly 90% of the country’s total landmass) and designated them as state forestlands. This area was then sub-classified into four major categories: (1) protected forests, (2) production forests, (3) nature conservation forests, and (4) conversion forests. Approximately 70% of the designated forestlands may be allocated for exploitation, while the remaining 30% is to be conserved.

Existing national laws and regulations do not promoted the well being and the interests of indigenous people, of which there are approximately 250 ethnic groups. There is not enough legal space for local communities to promote their own interests. Although traditional law should be respected, as prescribed by the constitution, projects and programmes in the interest of national development can take precedence. Being aware of a growing number of conflicts, feeling pressured at local, national and international levels, and learning global trends from neighbouring countries, the Government has thus begun to develop some regulations and programmes which are more people-orientated.

KDTI - Special Purpose Zone

None of the community-based policies or projects clearly defines property rights over land, trees and other forest resources. The State’s legal superiority is largely maintained, especially in identifying indigenous communities that may participate in the KDTI programme and in granting rights to these communities. None of the existing policies provide for the recognition of the customary, community-based rights of indigenous communities over land, forests and other natural resources.

Except for KDTI, which explicitly mentions that it is aimed at promoting further conservation of the repong damar system, all of the policies and regulations are biased towards mainstream conventional forest management. This bias is reflected by the limited application of each policy to a particular classification of forestland. As indigenous community resource management systems are not classified simply on the basis of
how the government classifies forestlands, a serious constraint for promoting genuine community based ecosystem management is generated.

Although there is no time limit for communities with a KDTI, they have to be recognised by the local government and their situation evaluated by the government every five years. Since the legislation was passed, only two sites have been awarded a KDTI. This tenure instrument, although it recognises the customary community, is awarded through the leader and not given to the community. The community can extract non-timber and timber products. For timber products, however, they are required to have a permit.

There are still a significant number of communities that are able to conserve and maintain sustainable community-based ecosystem management strategies. These include:

1. Krui, West Lampung -- who manage repong damar resin
2. Batak, South Tapanuli (North Sumatra) -- who manage salak
3. Dayak, West Kalimantan -- who manage traditional rubber tree gardens
4. Dayak Bentian, East Kalimantan - who cultivate traditional rattan gardens
5. Kaili, Central Sulawesi -- who have developed their own coffee farming system

For all intents and purposes to outsiders and even to experienced ecologists, these traditional ecosystem management systems look part of the natural forest. However, well-understood management activities that promote the growth of a specific resource are carried out.

Although community-based natural resource management is widespread in Indonesia and has been proven over the decades to be economically, ecologically and socially appropriate for both local and national interests, state laws and policies do not provide sufficient recognition, protection and support. Mainstream laws and policies on natural resource management are still dominated by a state-centered paradigm, sectoral biases, and conventional natural resource management sciences. Within the Indonesian civil society, there are growing concern and demands for fundamental reform of laws and policies related to natural resource management. These include:

1. a redefinition of the relationship between the state and local people;
2. a transformation of forest management laws and policies to support pluralistic community-based natural resource management;
3. and a democratic, just and equal allocation process.

PHILIPPINE - INDONESIA
EXCHANGE OF LEARNING AND EXPERIENCES

In November 1998, 15 Filipinos visited the rattan gardens of the Dayak people of East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The chosen participants reflected some of the policy issues that AFN is addressing throughout the Asian region and were therefore composed of DENR personnel who came from the Community Based Forest Management Programme (CBFMP) and from the National Integrated Protected Area Programme (NIPAP). There were also representatives from local government units and from indigenous people (IP) communities.

The group was split into three subgroups. The first subgroup focused on the community level learnings, the second on policy support mechanisms, and the third on implementation mechanisms.

The objectives of the visit were:

1. To provide Filipinos with an opportunity to view the traditional rattan management systems of Dayak communities, as well as to provide insights into the processing techniques and marketing support mechanisms that are working and not working within the Indonesian context.
2. To provide a venue for dialogue with Indonesian counterparts regarding certain aspects of community forest management policies and programs that can support traditional forest management systems.
Learnings and reflections from the visit of the three subgroups follow:

**Philippine - Indonesian Exchange: Summary of Key Learnings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modang, Lampua, and Pasir District:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Land use at Modang Village</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is little knowledge of the amount of land that has been converted from rattan gardens to palm oil plantations. A genuine facilitation process where the community can participate in multisectoral meetings or planning and where they can articulate their actual resources is needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dayak community, Lampua Village</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Social and cultural coherence remain strong despite the pressures from logging and oil palm extraction. Recognition and support of the traditional practices of the community by the national government will make the forest ecologically rich and economically viable in the long run.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Depleting rattan resources</strong></td>
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<td>Furniture industry managers are not aware of the issues is the areas where rattan is grown. Regular information on the actual rattan resources would enable them to have a broader understanding of the communities that manage their resource.</td>
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<td><strong>Lack of raw materials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The rattan gardens are being burned and converted for other forms of landuse. One trader intensifies rattan production in his own garden to try compensate for future lack of resources. Others remain indifferent.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NGO support</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is no coordination between government and NGOs in helping communities. NGOs play a major role in guiding communities in resource management. The government could support or partner with NGOs by allowing them to participate in the formulation and implementation of community-based forest practices and programmes of the government</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Industrialisation policy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>People are not consulted or even informed in terms of timber, rubber plantation, coal mining and oil palm development. There is a need to consider the socio-cultural realities of these activities and their de-stabilising affects on the communities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of orientation of foresters and officials on major policies</strong></td>
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<td>Major policies that relate to extraction of resources and other complimentary policies on</td>
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trade and industry and taxation are not clear. Foresters and officials need to be allowed to participated in information, communication and education campaigns. Policies could be improved if these officials were to participate in the formulation of policies, basing them on the field realities.

**Export tax and resource rents**

These do not necessarily flow back to the community but are given to the national government. A mechanism is needed where a big percentage of the tax goes directly to the communities. There is a need to clarify incomes and disbursements of the agencies receiving the tax and rent.

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**Demai, Kotai District, and Amuntai (South Kalimantan):**

**Land use**

The areas grown as rattan gardens are extensive, and follow natural boundaries, but these have not been documented. There needs to be a systematic documentation of the extent of the gardens and where the communities use the natural forest.

**National development**

Traditional law is supposed to be recognised in the constitution, but there is confusion over what is national development. Awarded rights need to be clarified vis-à-vis customary laws. Official recognition by government of the rattan gardens would provide a stronger protection for communities against encroachment by industrial development projects.

**Supply of rattan from the gardens**

Communities are beginning to experiment with the larger diameter species, because they have commercial value. The supply of smaller species is sustainable by their system of growing and harvesting. More technical assistance is needed to assess what other species have commercial viability and potential.

**Lack of support from Forestry Department**

Instead of ‘teaching’ rattan management to community members who already know rattan management techniques, the Forestry-Department could document the community’s management system for dissemination to other communities and facilitate community cross visits.

**Government and NGO coordination**

DTI was vary dynamic in its extension services in Demai and Amuntai. They were working with NGOs to monitor rattan prices for the last six months. DTI monitors the amount of rattan being collected by the traders. There could be further collaborative projects to assist NGOs in helping communities identify their rattan gardens and evaluate how much rattan is there and how much has been lost.

**Low farmgate prices for rattan**

Farmers still receive very low payments for their rattan in comparison with process set before the imposition of the export ban. Farmers do not carry out any processing activities. Clarifications on export taxes and a more expeditious lifting of the export ban should be encouraged. The development of farmer associations that can carry out some of the processing activities should be supported through small credit assistance.

**Market flow**

Farmer rattan is treated the same way as rattan obtained form the forest, and traders are charged forest rent values that are based on fixed prices, not on the market value. These are then passed on to the farmer. Tenure for the gardens should be clarified so that mechanisms for certifying rattan from gardens can be developed to exempt traders from payment.
Expensive transportation costs

Facilitation fees by police and military and other government officials increase the price of transportation for the traders. These costs are also passed on to the farmers. Greater control of corruption by lower government officials needs to be encouraged from the provincial government. NGOs and other business sectors should monitor and provide informations of graft and corruption to the provincial government.

Lack of product differentiation

The use of small rattan for mats and carpets is good, but more could be done is terms of developing village level handicrafts. Only a few communities used the waste products. DTI and NGOs could collaborate with neighbouring countries to develop training exchanges so their product design could be improved.

Lack of furniture manufactures in Kalimantan

There was an absence of large scale furniture manufactures in Samarinda and Banjarmasin. All the raw materials are available, but training and furniture designs are lacking. The provincial government expressed interest in developing this area. Relations with Filipino manufacturers and the DTI should be established and strengthened, so that the industry can be established in the province and thus further reduce transportation costs which could increase the price for the farmers.

Philippine IPs' Reflections on the Dayak Situation

Response

- The Dayak, as a community, must come up with an agreement to protect their land and forest
- The Government must promote or initiate systems or ways which respond to the cultural values and attitudes of the Dayaks
- The Dayak must work towards knowing different government policies relating to forestlands in order to be able to come up with appropriate plans of action.

Livelihood

- rice
- rattan
- forest
  - relation to man
  - respect
  - hope
  - life

Culture of Planting

- rice
- rattan
- fruit

Source of Life

- The culture of the Dayaks is very much alive in their speech and in their traditional belief system.
- The culture and livelihood of the Dayak are highly interlinked.
- They live by planting different crops such as rice, corn, rattan, fruits, and other forest products.
- The forest is highly linked to the Dayak's livelihood. As such they have high respect for the forest.
- The Dayak think of the forest as their hope
- The forest is their source of life. The land is their life

Threats
VOICES FROM THE FOREST INDONESIA

MUARA BOMBOY, DAMAI, EAST KALIMANTAN

A 60 year old rattan farmer from Muara Bombay, Damai, East Kalimantan, whose family has one of the largest areas planted to rattan, 100 hectares recounts:

Rattan was planted by my relative. We felt safe to plant rattan before as the land is large and no one else uses our area. We had no need for certificates, only traditional law.

There are about 103 families in Bomboy. Each has a rattan garden of anything from two to ten hectares per family. Our area is very large, so we have to get others to help in the harvest. There were many fires due to El Nino, but the people here protected their forest and gardens.

Several plants are maintained for their seeds which are used for propagation in the nursery by the house. In selecting a seedling for planting, strong plants that are 30-40 cm tall and with 4 leaves are chosen. They are planted approximately six by six meters apart. This process of selection and planting is conducted during the same week every year. Training was given by the forestry department, but this was similar to the ways taught by the elders. The rattan can be harvested after 8-12 years. Valuable tree species are kept in the gardens, those for timber, nuts, oil and fruit trees. Others are cut to allow sunlight on the growing rattan.

The average harvest depends upon the soil fertility in each garden, but I can get 800,000 Rh/tonne of wet rattan even three years. My family needs help in harvesting so we share the income from the rattan 50:50, with the cutters that help.

The rattan used to be paid for by the pole. But due to competition, the traders changed to paying by the kilos. The cutters prefer this because at least its clear. I am not dependent on one special buyer. There is one big one, and lots of little ones to go to. As a cutter I pay no fee. The fee is paid to the forestry department, but it's the trader who pays.

We receive lower prices now. Before 1987, one kilo of rattan could buy more than one kilo of rice. Now, four kilos of rattan buy the same amount of rice.

Open pit coal mining is the biggest threat for our rattan areas. We want recognition from the forestry department, but we still don't have it.
Rattan is planted along the river banks to prevent soil erosion

Concerns and Threats to the Dayak Way of Life

The Dayak elders of Villages in the Damai Area of Kaltim expressed concern over factors that are changing their way of life:

“Education and religion are influencing the attitudes of our young people and are ultimately affecting their culture. But they are not for the better.”

“We respect the individuality and rights of the younger generation. However, they must respect the traditional system. If the young people decide to abandon the tradition, then I, as the traditional leader, shall send them out of the community and drive them away.”

“What you say happened in the Philippines during the 70s and 80s is happening to us now. We feel threatened by the different logging companies, plantations, and mining companies which all have permits from the national government to enter the areas occupied by the Dayak people.”

“Migrant cutters are a problem. Guidelines are needed to tell who is a real rattan gardener and who is not. With other Dayak villages, there are traditional solution so this is not a problem.”

“The government and the forestry department gives us no support.”

“Now we need recognition from the government, and we need support to do this. Our traditional or customary rights should be basis of all other laws unless it’s in the interest of national development. This is laid down in the constitution. In reality, however, it’s not clear what is in the interest of national development. This must be defined by government. The moment the government says that coal mining, logging and plantations are all in the interest of national development, our traditional rights would then mean nothing”

“Our hope for the future is that the quality of life is higher and that our children's schooling can be paid for by selling rattan from the gardens”

“People are being forced to sell their gardens, this is a problem as they don't want to go. They want recognition from government so that they can stay.”

“The price is dropping again, it started to improve after the reformasi. But the price of rice and other products is still too high. The traders get three times the profit, and the price of rattan is protected.”

“We want financial capital to form a cooperative so we can collect, process and sell our rattan in Samarinda.”

Three main concerns identified by communities near Demai, Kaltim:

- They want Government recognition for their areas.
- Companies, such as logging and mining, encroach on their areas.
- Price of rattan is too low.
Forest have been converted into oil palm plantations as supported by government policy and by the lifting of the export ban.

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