

BUKIDNON ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT 2008
26-27 June 2008
New Bus Terminal Building , Valencia City

I. Background & Rationale

There is now a growing concern on the gradual loss of important bio-diversity and other resources within our so called important bio-diversity and conservation areas, due to habitat destruction, over-exploitation and increasing human population and widespread poverty; the conversion of forest ecosystem into an agricultural land and industrial land uses, as well as environmental and biological pollution. These trends greatly affect not only our quality of life but also our future and that of our succeeding generations. Since problems on environment have broader and wider scope and implications, its solutions no longer lie as a monopoly of the government, nor the civil society and the private sector. This means solutions on these environmental concerns would require collaborative efforts among public and private institutions. The Millennium Development Goals on the “eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (1) and ensuring environmental sustainability (7) illustrate the practicality and importance of instituting effective partnership between state and non-state agency in the attainment of its goals. A more urgent means to consolidate a citizen’s initiatives and strategies toward sustainable natural resources and environmental management (SNREM) is through holding of a provincial wide summit where voices across peoples and stakeholders are heard and responded to by proper authorities.

The Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development, recognize the importance of biodiversity conservation as one of the component in attaining its sustainability goals and that, upon the ratification by congress, Philippines becomes one of the signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD likewise underscores the importance of ecosystems approach which necessitates broad partnership alliance and a convergence of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches in SNREM. In this regard, linkages and networking between indigenous communities, the civil society and state agents is essential to its success.

Parallel to the above development, the Local Government Code of 1991 seeks to transform local government units (LGUs) into self reliant entities and active partner in the attainment of national goals through a more responsive and accountable local government structure instituted through a system of decentralization. In the case of the environment, the national government (DENR) devolved to the LGUs its community based projects, enforcement of environmental laws and institute mechanisms for co-management and participation in the aspect of reserved and protected area management.

Among the provinces in the country, Bukidnon—particularly in its cities and municipalities, have various innovative, creative and participatory approaches on natural resource management practices which are community-based and have made various attempts to undertake sustainable methods. By holding a provincial-wide Environmental Summit, these initiatives and interventions will be reported, documented and hopefully, replicated elsewhere. More importantly, it will ensure firming up a common stand among the constituents of Bukidnon from the government, non-government and communities—to have a clear stance on various environmental and

developmental issues relevant to the realization of sustainable development. Hence along this line, the Summit will ensure the implementation and reinforcement of practical mechanisms that need to be instituted in a medium or long-term practice on sustainable natural and environmental resources management systems.

The Bukidnon Environmental Summit 2008 will offer practical insights into these important issues, such as: “How should we address the challenge of a rapidly degrading natural resources and critical areas in the region? What are the strategies needed to balance economic progress while maintaining the integrity of our environment? How can communities—like the indigenous peoples succeed in co-managing the natural resources inside their ancestral domains but which the State has a greater stakes considering these areas also important biodiversity and conservation areas? What are effective modalities in public and private sector partnership in sustainable natural resource and environmental management?”

It is interesting to note that best practices and lessons learned after almost 17 years of the local government code implementation in the area of environmental management may be a good platform to push forward for a multi-stakeholder consolidated plan of action to further effective governance and institutionalization of our important biodiversity and conservation areas. These are essential elements in shaping responsible eco-governance, as well as sound and participatory planning for effective implementation of SNREM. Likewise, in the long run, a well-managed environment contributes to our vision of healthy population and safe environment for habitation, and enhanced with cultural diversity and rich and dynamic traditional heritage of Bukidnon.

The Environmental Summit aims at converging environmental leaders, movers and activists from the government, the civil society and from organized communities particularly the indigenous peoples. It intends to capture the issues and challenges, as well as perspectives and insights among a community of practitioners gathered in one crucial issue—how to save and protect our environment? The Summit features six break-out sessions following specific themes or areas of interests and the group shall be reconvened again for the plenary and in coming out with a provincial-wide Declaration.

The event will be held at the New Bus Terminal Building at Valencia City . This event is our own way of celebrating the Environment Month. We join the rest of the world in contributing collective and relevant actions that would impact both our environment and the security of our lives.

The Bukidnon Environmental Summit 2008 is organized by the Provincial Government of Bukidnon and the City Governments of Valencia and Malaybalay. This initiative is supported by the Diocese of Bukidnon, Bukidnon State University and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

To ensure full cooperation among government agencies and stakeholders, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) resolution number 2008-523 (10th SP) introduced by Vice Governor Alex P. Calingasan to conduct the Bukidnon Environmental summit on June 25-26, 2008 at the Valencia City new terminal, Valencia City Bukidnon.

II. Goal

To address various Environmental challenges confronting the Province of Bukidnon that will ensure its sustainable development.

III. Objectives

1. To reconcile and ensure balance between development and economic growth as against environmental sustainability.
2. To address conservation of the province remaining natural resources vis-à-vis a growing population, with ever increasing demand for food, water, health services and economic security.
3. To craft a summit declaration and platform that will consolidate efforts and pool resources among environmental practitioners towards sustainable development.

IV. Working Themes

1. Local Governance in important biodiversity and conservation areas
2. Ecotourism: strategy for local environmental governance
3. Government and Private Sector Partnership on Sustainable Natural Resources and Environmental Management (SNREM)
4. Resource Mobilization and Financing for SNREM
5. Community Participation in SNREM
6. Institutionalizing SNREM in the academe

Sub Group Themes of the Summit

Theme 1: Local Governance in Important Biodiversity and Conservation Areas
Sub-Group Convener: PASu/CENRO Felix Mirasol, Jr.

1. Basic Concepts

Local Governance - government of local area, the government of a town, city, country, or region at a local level by locally elected politicians.

Biodiversity - It is the variety and variability among living organism from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity species, among species and of ecosystem. It is nature's richness and variation of living things on earth.

Conservation Areas - it is a legally protected area, an area of special environmental or historical importance that is protected from casual changes by law.

Conservation - protection of valued resources, the preservation, management, and care of natural and cultural resources.

2. Goals

To establish a network of effectively managed protected and conserve areas in the province that will secure its people of the perpetual existence of highly diverse ecosystem and biologically unique features for sustainable development.

3. Objectives

- a. To identify and list down important biodiversity (IB) and conservation areas (CA) in the province that are of top management priorities for the existence of native plants and animals, eco-tourism, natural heritage, habitat protection and socio-economic development.
- b. To identify existing laws and policies governing biodiversity and conservation areas and its strengths and weaknesses.
- c. To formulate plan of action to institutionalize IB and CA based on the good practices and lessons learned in the province.
- d. To establish and operationalize a network of IB and CA practitioners and key implementers.
- e. To formulate practical users guide and “HOW TOs” in the institutionalization and legislation of IB and CA.

4. How are we going to do this? (applicable to all working themes)

- a. Paper presentations
- b. Identify Major Issues and Challenges
- c. Formulate action plan by Priority IB and CA.
- d. Agree on Substantial contribution to the summit declaration.

5. Tentative Titles during Sub-group Session (Paper Presentation & Open Forum):

- 1.1 Laws and policies that will institutionalize/legislate certain areas as protected areas under Republic Act no. 7586, critical habitat under RA 9147, caves resources under RA 9075, developing certain areas as community watershed under RA 7160 and DENR-LGU joint Memorandum circular no. 98-01, among others.
- 1.2 Identify IB and CA in the Province, status and management mechanisms in place. Also discuss its current strength and weaknesses.
- 1.3 Protected Areas currently managed under RA 7586 with emphasis on good practices and lessons learned.
- 1.4 IB and CA presently managed by LGUs (CEDAR, Lake Apo and Mangima)
- 1.5 Processes and activities undertaken for the proposed Pantaron Range Protected Area.

Theme 2: Ecotourism
A Strategy for Local Environmental Governance for Sustainable Natural Resource And Environmental Management

Sub-Group Convener: Dr. Antonio T. Sumbalan D.M./Environmental Planner

Theme and Scope

The paper consists of three sections. The introductory section provides for the conceptual definition, elements and principles of ecotourism. Strategy, environmental governance, natural resource and environmental management are explained. Also, it puts into context the relevance of ecotourism as a strategy for effective local environmental governance for sustainable natural resource and environmental management.

The second section deals on ecotourism product, its identification and classification, and ecotourism product development. It posits that the first thing in ecotourism development is the appreciation by the communities of their involvement and their understanding on how ecotourism products are classified. The importance of social preparation of the community in ecotourism product development is also discussed.

Finally the last section describes how a sustainable ecotourism enterprise is developed. The principles that have to be observed in developing a sustainable ecotourism enterprise are discussed, as well as the basic steps in the conduct of situation analysis. The basic feasibility analysis, developing a concept paper and engaging the community for ecotourism are also highlighted.

What is hoped to be achieved?

To create a sort of bandwagon mentality among us all in Bukidnon towards sustainable natural resource and environmental management. The approach is to have a common understanding of what is ecotourism is all about. The specific objectives are as follows:

- ✓ reach into a consensus that ecotourism will benefit the conservation of natural and the cultural resources, and at the same time provide benefits to the host community;
- ✓ understand the inherent conflict in the relationship between people, nature and conservation, and the fact that ecotourism can contribute towards the conservation of natural resources and the preservation of cultural integrity;
- ✓ recognize that negative impacts to the environment and host communities can be associated with ecotourism. Thus, the need to minimize such impact;
- ✓ ensure that ecotourism is sustainable in terms of being ecologically and financially viable;
- ✓ articulate that local communities should be in control and benefit from ecotourism activities; and
- ✓ assure that ecotourism is an appropriate alternative non-destructive livelihood that provides communities with income that will take them away from resource extraction.

Theme 3: Government and Private Sector Partnership in Sustainable Natural Resource and Environmental Management (SNREM)
Sub-Group Convener: PENRO Agustilo Obsioma

1. Basic Concepts

Public/Government Sector
Private Sector
Partnership
Sustainable
Natural Resource and Environmental Management

2. Scope

Identify and connect public and private institutions involved in SNREM and list down their contributions in the realization of sustainable development in the province. Distinguish uniqueness of their contributions as well as in their initiatives and strategies which are worth learning or replicating. Future partnership arrangement is perceived to lead towards a closer collaboration between the Government and the Private Sector which benefits both the communities and the environment in general.

3. Tentative Titles during Sub-group Session (Paper Presentation & Open Forum):

- 3.1 Best Practices on Mining - Diocese of Malaybalay
- 3.2 Solid Waste Management - Valencia LGU
- 3.3 Forest Protection Activities - CENRO-DENR
- 3.4 Restoration and Rehabilitation in a Protected Area - KASILAK
- 3.5 Land Use Planning - ESSC

Theme 4: Resource Mobilization and Financing for SNREM
Sub-Group Convener: Dir. Belen Daba, Regional Technical Director, DENR-X
And Forester Marilou Clarete - Chief, Protected Areas Wildlife Bureau

1. Basic Concepts

Resources
Mobilization
Resource Mobilization
Financing

2. Scope

Looks into all kinds of sources and strategies in financing SNREM. Resource capital come in the form of human (personnel and volunteers), physical (resources), social (networks and alliances), cultural (indigenous traditional practices), institutional (government and civil society), and financial (monetary, material and real resources). What is crucial in these capital sources is the ability and timeliness to link with them. This group will also examine ways of accessing and connecting to financial institutions and how other sources of capital can be tapped as equity, while providing some capacity building of community partners to be able to similarly access such opportunities.

Theme 5: Indigenous Peoples and Community Participation in SNREM
Sub-Group Convener: Easterluna S. Canoy - Director, Kitanglad Integrated NGOs (KIN)
and Sammy Cadavos - Director, Bukidnon Environment & Natural Resources

Basic Concepts

Indigenous Cultural Communities/Peoples - descendants of populations that inhabited in the Philippines at the time of colonization and continue to live as homogenous societies in communally bounded ancestral territories, sharing common bonds of language, customs and other distinctive cultural traits. They number around 11 million or 15 percent of the total Philippine population.

Community -

Participation - “the action or fact of partaking, having or forming a part of.”
(Oxford Dictionary)

Community Participation -
Community-based Natural Resource Management -
Participatory Development -

Theme and Scope

“Community Participation” is one of the overused jargons in environment and development advocacies that needs a new frame of reference in the light of local experiences and insights among subjects and advocates. The paper will re-examine the concept, issues and gains concerning the role of communities, particularly among the indigenous peoples in terms of managing natural and environmental resources inside their territories claimed (officially or not) as ancestral domains. This issue is crucial since the term also connotes socio-political and cultural functions and dimensions. In addition, most human rights instruments and even the Convention of Biodiversity recognize the rights of the IPs in terms of intellectual property, access and benefits of their natural resources claimed by the State and its agents. This theme highlights notions on people participation and how it is seen in the light of actual dynamics at the community level and their existing relationship with government and civil society agents.

Discussions on this theme are expected to clarify dilemmas on people’s empowerment while introspecting from its achievements and failures. It will also attempt to distinguish the inner and outer requirements on community participation, the various mechanisms and strategies to ensure effective and equitable people’s participation particularly in SNREM. More importantly, the workshop along this line is expected to facilitate the means wherein effective approaches on community participation will be reinforced in succeeding IP and environmental programs and initiatives.

Tentative Papers

- ✓ Role of Bukidnon Indigenous Culture in Managing Mt. Kitanglad - Bae Inatlawan
- ✓ The CADT of Mintapod Higaonons, a Wildlife Sanctuary
- ✓ Involving Tribal Council in SNREM - Datu Makapukaw Adolino Saway

Theme 6: Institutionalization of SNREM in the Academe
Sub-Group Convener: Dr. Tumapon and Dr. Joy Mirasol, Ph.D.

Basic Concepts
Institution
Institutionalization
Academe
Education