

Status and Challenges of Protected Areas in Cordillera Region, Philippines:

Local Government Perspective

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The People


1.3M population
92% from indigenous groups
Livelihood predominantly agriculture
HDI ranks (77 provinces)

- Apayao #43
- Mountain Province #40
- Kalinga #39
- Ifugao #24
- Abra #22
- Benguet #1



Protected Areas Forest Cover & Watersheds

Cordillera Administrative Region




Landuse situation

- Cultural resource management practices (muyong, tayan, batangan)
- Overlapping land classification
 - DENR: 85 % forestlands
 - NCIP: almost 100% ancestral domains
- Overlapping land uses and development agenda
 - "watershed cradle" for wet rice agriculture, commercial vegetable production, lowland agriculture
 - mining areas and applications – large scale and small scale
 - "food basket", major vegetable producer
 - protected areas: ecological services in terms of water, biodiversity, etc.

Ancestral Domains and Tenure Instruments

CAR:
9 CADTs issued
7 CADTs and 31 CALTs prioritized for processing (160K hectares 2005)

National:
57 CADTs issued (1.1M hectares 2007)
71 CADTs prioritized for processing (2005)



Protected Areas

Community conserved areas
batangan, muyong, tayan...



8 protected areas
4 national parks, first one declared in 1940
4 watershed reserves, one NIPAS proclaimed
5 being called for revocation by either local indigenous communities, local gov't, or DENR

Protected Area	Coverage (ha)/ Year Created	Status	Limitations and Challenges
1. Mt. Data National Park	5,512 / 1940	Proposed for disestablishment	PAMBs rarely convene; biodiversity loss and depletion
2. Balbalasang-Balbalan NP	1,338 / 1974	Proposed for expansion; IP villages, through mayor gave FPIC to establish Natural Biotic Area	
3. Casamata Hill NP	57 / 1974	Local people and regional PAWS support declaration as NIPAS PA	
4. Marcos Highway Watershed Forest Reserve	6,105 / 1978	Proposed for exclusion from the NIPAS; largely converted to residential, commercial and agricultural areas	PAMBs rarely convene
5. Lower Agno Watershed Forest Reserve	39,304 / 1983		
6. Mt. Pulag NP	11,550 / 1987	Kalanguya Tribe requested revocation of establishing Mt. Pulag as PA; under review by PAMB	On-going conversion of mossy forests into vegetable gardens; biodiversity threat; illegal cutting of pine forests
7. Upper Agno River Basin Reserve	77,000 / 1994	Benquet province and La Trinidad municipality asked to recall UARR policy; under review by PAMB	



Local Governance and ENR management

- Decentralized forest management responsibilities
- Social forestry program (ISF), community-based forest management program (CBFM)
- Management of communal watersheds
- Endorsements or non-endorsement to mining applications
- Access to share in benefits derived from natural resources, e.g. from mining companies, water from hydropower corporations

Strategies and methods to incorporate equity and livelihood security in protected areas

	Country Level	Local Level	Community level
Policy development	PD 705 NIPAS IPRA	Development plans by land classification	Ancestral domain/lands, tax declaration
Program design	CHARM		
Implementation	NIPAS – proclaimed protected areas and initial NIPAS components IPRA-FPIC CARL		
Management	NIPAS – PAMB IPRA – indigenous institutions LGUs		

- **Local policy options and tools**
- ancestral and land use and zoning plans as culturally and environmentally appropriate CLUP to delineate protected areas and agricultural areas
- LGU resolutions and ordinances
- Indigenous institutions and practices
- Environmental code
- PAMB to reconcile and adapt definitions of protected area

Constraints to effective implementation

- LGUs' and government agencies' tendency to focus more on boundary conflict and less on actual environmental issues
- Limited capacity of PAMBs
- Lack of political will among local officials and local government agencies
- Proclamations disregarded prior rights and existing land uses
- Non-recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to forest resources, ban on cutting as disincentive to forest protection
- Sectoral approach, i.e., NIA funds is for irrigation facilities and watershed management is the mandate of DENR; Agriculture promotes high value crops without adequate controls on cropland expansion

Steps to overcome constraints

- Inter-LGU management of protected areas using watershed approach
- Multi-stakeholder partnership (LGUs, indigenous communities, DENR, NCIP, NIA, etc.) in planning, implementation and monitoring
- Strengthen indigenous forest and natural resources management practices
- Environmental evaluation and accounting of natural resources
Adequate accounting of ecological services of protected areas as input in planning > incentives to communities and LGUs for protection of PAs
- Definition of coverage of PAs to take into consideration, reconcile culturally accepted and environmentally appropriate "protected areas" with local commitment
- Support of LGUs and communities in the lowlands provinces that share in environmental benefits or are affected by adverse impacts of forestland use changes

Opportunities for effective implementation

- IPs' have control of local leadership
- LGUs are predominantly IPs who generally belong to the same ethnic group

Recommendations for effective implementation

- Support inter-local government management of protected areas using watershed approach
- Start multi-stakeholder partnership (LGUs, indigenous communities, DENR, NCIP, NIA, etc.) from planning, to implementation, to monitoring
- Strengthen indigenous forest and natural resources management practices

Recommendations...

- Recognize cultural diversity in identifying protected areas
- Ensure livelihood of local communities
- Capacitate local communities
- Compensate local communities
 - in terms of goods and services to avoid "elite capture" and tribal "dealers"

Salamat Apo!