Proposed Forest Carbon Development Project at Arakan Forest Corridor

Raquel C. Lopez, Jayson C. Ibañez*, Rodel D. Lasco

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION
Arakan is composed of 28 municipalities populated by ethno-linguistic groups, predominantly of the Manobo-Kulaman and Manobo-Timanamano tribes. The Manobo tribes are considered the original settlers. Total land area is 69 432.79 ha. Classified agricultural land comprises about 14%, however, about 24% is used for crops, while forest is only 4%. After commercial logging (1960s-1980s) and agriculture encroaching the logged-over areas, only isolated fragments of forest cover remain in the mountain ranges of Snaka, Mahuson and Kabalian-Binongon-Kulaman (KABIKU), which are home to important wildlife species such as the IUCN ‘critically endangered’ Philippine eagle and the ‘vulnerable’ Philippine hawk eagle Sootypius philippensis.

Though relatively small, Snaka is regarded as one of the world’s important bird areas because of the relatively high proportion of unique and threatened species it contains. Mahuson has 55 recording sites of which one was designated by the Cebu Team as Critical Habitat. KABIKU has 17 localities with at least one species considered threatened. The project will include the areas where the following endangered species can be found: Philippine Tarsier, Philippine Eagle, Philippine Rhino, Critically endangered Philippine Wild Pig, and others.

KEY ISSUES AND CONCERNS
Socio-economic Arrangements
Incentives will be provided to each landholder and household participating in “rainforestation” farming. Owing to budget limitations, and to accommodate as many households as possible, for CY 2009-2010 only 0.25 ha (250 m²) for each landholder receive the equivalent of Php 5,150 (~USD 113) per year.

FORESTRY CARBON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
The project will use an agroforestry scheme and specifically employ “rainforestation” farming, which will be tree establishment starting with pioneer tree species then introducing long-term shadow species under the canopy of grown pioners.

Discovering the forest carbon potential of the proposed forest carbon development (FCD) project area with an aggregate total of 216 hectares consisting of 29 parcels within the three communities. All parcels are covered by either a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) or a Certificate of Stewardship Contract (CSC).

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT APPROACH
The project will use the “community-based conservation” approach. Technical Arrangements
The representatives of the indigenous communities (INAMADLA, PALUPA, TULPA and KFA) in the four community locations will enter a binding contract called a Conservation Agreement for partnership with PEF. A separate Reafforestation Agreement will be made with the landholders/owners who have allotted portions of their land to the project.

Socio-economic Arrangements
Incentives will be provided to each landholder and household participating in “rainforestation” farming. Owing to budget limitations, and to accommodate as many households as possible, for CY 2009-2010 only 0.25 ha (250 m²) for each landholder receive the equivalent of Php 5,150 (~USD 113) per year.