

Project Update: February 2008

I am happy to report that after a long period of waiting for the right time to enter the communities, we finally did so last month. Tulgao, one of our project sites, is actually made up of two distinct political units. We held a community meeting for both sites and have received community endorsement to proceed with the resource inventory and mapping. We were, however, not as successful in Dananao (Chananaw).

The community had refused the project despite some members wanting it earlier. After familiarizing ourselves with the area, we found out that there are after all two major watersheds, and given our resources, we can only realistically inventory Tulgao. In our final report, we will provide our insights instead on our own experience in Dananao on the process of free and prior informed consent.

Read more about the progress to date together with photographs in the report below. Since being granted assistance by the Rufford Laing Foundation under its Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation window, this project has initiated the following activities:

1. Consultations with the local chief executive of the municipality of Tinglayan, Kalinga to acquire municipal government support for the project (7 December 2007 and 17 January 2008)
2. Conduct of an *Orientation and Training on the Use of Global Positioning System in Research* (27 – 28 December 2007)



Left: Trainees recording GPS readings during the field exercise. Right: Trainees comparing notes after the field exercise.

The training aimed to introduce the GPS technology through lectures and a short field exercise. This training brought together the project team and six members of the municipal staff, specifically from the municipal agriculturist's office and the municipal engineering office. These employees will be taking part in the resource inventory in the project area.

3. Travel to the project area for community meetings; reconnaissance of the target area; and preliminary data collection (19 – 22 January 2008)
 - Community meetings

Separate community meetings were held in the villages of Tulgao West and Tulgao East and in Dananao (Chananaw). The main purpose of the meetings was to acquire community support for the project. Present at both consultations were elders of the community, as well as men and interested women of the village. In Tulgao, the community consented to the conduct of a limited resource inventory and mapping of their village, while Dananao refused the project.

While various members of the community of Dananao upheld the value of the inventory, others were more cautious and had not endorsed the project. The team later learned that mistrust was developed among community members as a result of past experiences with other individuals and entities that had not delivered on their commitments.

The request for assistance to map and inventory the area was earlier made by some members of the community. They felt at that time that they needed hard data to prepare for the consultations on the proposals to explore their domain for geothermal energy production and other development projects. Their past experiences have, however, spoiled their interest for any mapping and resource inventory efforts.



Community Meetings

- Reconnaissance and collection of preliminary data

With the assistance of local officials, the team was able to orient itself with the area and identify the sampling area for the resource inventory. Data were collected on some flora and fauna found within the settlement and immediate surroundings of the village. Recording of data with the GPS receiver was also done. The data will be used as inputs for land cover classification of the entire domain.



Establishing Locations



Collection of points with a GPS receiver within major land uses

Future plans:

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| February to March | - acquisition and processing of satellite data |
| | - preparations for 10-day field inventory |
| April | - field inventory |
| May - July | - data processing and report writing |
| August | - community reporting |
| September | - finalization of report |