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Traditional forest conservation knowledge/technologies in the Cordillera, Northern Philippines

Leni D. Camacho ^a ... Lucrecio L. Rebugio ^a

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Abstract

In the Philippines, indigenous knowledge has been recognized to contribute to sustainability of production systems, having been validated for their technical and scientific soundness by many investigators. It was in 1992 that the Philippine government gave recognition to the potentials of indigenous knowledge systems following the Earth Summit in 1992. Prior to this, scientists/researchers, development workers and lawmakers in the Philippines were preoccupied with their craft seeking “modern” ways of doing and accomplishing things. Cordillera in the Northern Philippines is a host to many indigenous cultures like *Isneg*, *Kalinga*, *Bontok*, *Kankanaey*, *Tinguian*, *Gaddang*, *Ayangan* and *Tuwali*, *Kalanguya* or *Ikalahan*, *Ibaloy* and *Karao* whose traditional knowledge systems were subject of many studies and investigations.

The paper describes the different knowledge systems for natural resources management in the Cordillera as practiced by the people with different beliefs, culture and traditions. The paper showcases different resource conserving experiences in these cultures like *muyong* and *ala-a* systems of the *Ifugaos*; *lapat* among the *Isneg* and *Tingguians*; *inum-an*, *gen-gen*, *day-og*, *balkah*, *kinebbah*, *tuping* and *pamettey* of the *Ikalahans*. These knowledge systems have been practiced by the indigenous peoples in the Cordillera and have been transmitted from generation to generation, making their way of life in harmony with their physical and social surroundings. While culture is environment specific, adoption/transfer of some indigenous technologies that may be fitting to other cultures and communities, with a little modification to suit their needs, can be done.



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Keywords

Cordillera; Forest conservation technologies; *Gen-gen*; Indigenous/traditional knowledge; *Lapat*, *Muyong*

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