



## Woodlot or 'Muyong'

### Philippines

**Woodlot is a forest management approach which aims to provide food, wood for fuel, construction and material for woodcarving and to provide a steady source of water for the lower-hilly riceland area.**

**Aim/objectives:** Woodlot or 'muyong' as it is called in the local language is basically a timber management system. The harvesting of non-timber products like fruits and other benefits like the maintenance of a stable water supply are secondary objectives. Fuelwood and construction timber are the major products of woodlot. The usual size of woodlot is not more than one hectare and is individually owned. The approach is believed to have started at least a century ago. It began when it became apparent that sources of fuelwood near homes were becoming difficult to find. The approach also came about when people realized the need for accountability in the use and management of natural resources. The ancestors of the present-day owner of the woodlots were influenced by the relationship of a reliable and steady water supply and the existence of forest. Woodlots normally evolved from swidden fields. The owners encouraged the growth of preferred species either by direct seeding or by transplanting seedlings uprooted from nearby forest.

**Methods:** Present practices involve the growing of introduced-fast growing species such as mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) and gmelina (*Gmelina arborea*). Rattan a valuable material for the furniture industry is also raised in the woodlot. Medicinal herbs are also gathered. Mushrooms and nuts are also grown. Woodlot is an approach unique to the indigenous tribes of the Cordillera. Boundaries, tenures and disputes are settled based on local traditions and beliefs. Common disputes arise from illegal gathering of fruit products. Transfer of ownership is upon the discretion of parents and only to married children. Inheritance of a woodlot denotes the handing down of authority and responsibility over the family. Woodlot or 'muyong' has been hailed as one of the nine successful 'Traditional Forest Related Knowledge' (TFRK). In terms of sophistication and social organization, woodlot is no equal among the approaches being practiced by the different ethnic groups in the country.

## Problem, objectives and constraints

### Problems

Lack of fuelwood and timber for construction and wood carving. Lack of materials for the furniture industry. Supply food and medicine. Provide steady and reliable source of water supply for domestic needs and for irrigation.

### Aims/Objectives

Sustainable use of forest resources by employing traditional beliefs, customs and traditions. Promote ecological balance.

**left:** Map showing the area where the SWC approach is located.

**right:** The terraces are valuable resource in the Cordillera for food production and for tourism. Forest management is important in their protection and conservation.

**Location:** Mountain Province and Ifugao,  
**Approach area:** 13.00 km<sup>2</sup>

**Type of Approach:** traditional/indigenous  
**Focus:** mainly on conservation with other activities

**WOCAT database reference:** A\_PHI006en

**Related technology(ies):**

**Compiled by:** Not registered

**Date:** Before 1992

Constraints addressed		
	Constraint	Treatment
technical	Lack of knowledge on the proper care and maintenance of forest resources.	Provisions of traditional skills, customs and beliefs in the care and maintenance.
legal / land use and / water rights	Regalian doctrine which says that all public lands are owned by the state.	Regular maintenance of a portion of the forest by weeding, removing of vines and undesirable species.

## Participation and decision making

Stakeholders / target groups	Approach costs met by:
 land users, individual	other (land users) 100%
	<b>Total 100%</b>
Annual budget for SLM component: US\$	

**Decisions on choice of the Technology(ies)** by land users\* alone (self-initiative / bottom-up)

**Decisions on method of implementing the Technology(ies):** by land users\* alone (self-initiative / bottom-up)

**Approach designed by:** national specialists

**Implementing bodies:**

Land user involvement		
Phase	Involvement	Activities
Initiation/motivation	Passive	
Planning	Passive	
Implementation	Passive	
Monitoring/evaluation	None	
Research	None	

**Differences between participation of men and women:** Yes, moderate  
Men usually do the work in the field and they are the ones who will settle disputes.

**Involvement of disadvantaged groups:** Yes, great  
Decisions on how a woodlot is managed is made by the clan members themselves. Usually the eldest among the siblings has the authority to decide on what should be done.

## Technical support

### Training / awareness raising:

Training provided for land user

Training was on-the-job

Training focused on informal training among family members on the management of forest for sustainable use.

### Advisory service:

Name: N/A

The extension system is quite adequate to ensure continuation of activities. Environmental protection particularly watershed management is a top priority of the government and NGO's. The 'woodlot' approach of watershed protection is regarded as a perfect example of forest management being employed by indigenous people.

### Research:

Yes, moderate research. Topics covered include sociology, technology, economics / marketing, ecology

Mostly on-farm research.

Researches on traditional forest knowledge of different ethnic groups.

## External material support / subsidies

**Contribution per area (state/private sector):** .

**Labour:** Voluntary. only family/clan labor was involved.

### Inputs:

- Equipment (machinery, tools, etc): hand tools. Not financed
- Agricultural (seeds, fertilizers, etc): seeds, seedlings. Not financed

**Credit:** Credit was not available

**Support to local institutions:** Yes, moderate support with by promoting aesthetics

## Monitoring and evaluation

**Monitored aspects**

**Methods and indicators**

**Changes as result of monitoring and evaluation:**

## Impacts of the Approach

**Improved sustainable land management:** Yes, great; The approach contributed to effective water conservation to sustain the rice terraces

**Adoption by other land users / projects:** Yes, few; The concept is being adopted in other areas with different degrees of success. It is being talked about as a classic example of resource management.

### Training, advisory service and research:

#### - Training effectiveness

Agricultural advisor / trainers: good  
Politicians / decision makers: good  
School children / students: good  
SLM specialists: good  
Planners: good  
Teachers: good  
Land users\*: excellent

Increased awareness on the need for effective soil and water conservation and on watershed management.

#### - Advisory service effectiveness

Technicians / conservation specialists: good  
School children / students: good  
Politicians / decision makers: good  
Planners: good  
Teachers: good  
Land users\*: good

Sustained knowledge on proper resources management.

#### - Research contributing to the approach`s effectiveness: Moderately

It proved that the approach or system is sustainable, although there is no hard quantitative data to back this up.

### Land/water use rights:

Help - greatly in the implementation of the approach. The land use right (no land titles) is being respected and honored and the approach fits well in the over-all scheme.

The approach did not at all reduce the land/water use rights problem. The land use right is well respected in the communities. Conflicts are peacefully resolve through compromises and agreements.

### Long-term impact of subsidies:

Negative long-term impact: None

## Concluding statements

**Main motivation of land users to implement SLM:**

**Sustainability of activities:**

Yes the land users can sustain the approach activities without support.

## Strengths and → how to sustain/improve

Respect for land users rights even though there is no legal documents to hold on for the land → Maintaining the unique traditional customs/traditions. Full implementation of Ancestral Domain Act.

Continous replanting → Select fast growing species.

Strong resolve of the land users on the need for sustainability. → Information sharing by way of seminars/meetings.

Strong respect for customs/traditions in the management of resources. → Preservation of cultural values.

Strong backing from local government units (LGU's) → Continous information education campaign (IEC)

## Weaknesses and → how to overcome

Not all members of the community is involved/benefited. → Wider involvement using other areas within the vicinity of the community.

Tendency for the woodlot to be commercialized and over-exploited. → Carrying capacity of the woodlot should be determined.

Woodlot can be a sanctuary for pests for the nearby rice fields. → Maintenance and cleanliness.



Copyright (c) WOCAT ()