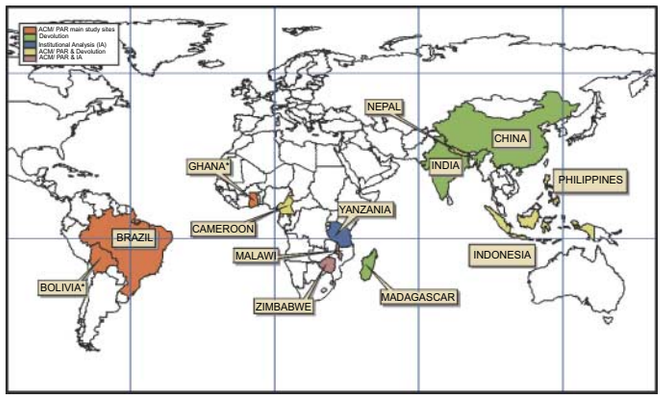
ACM in the Philippines and around the world

CIFOR and its partners operate at two CBFM sites in the Philippines. In Palawan, some 70 kilometers from Puerto Princesa, CIFOR undertakes its ACM research on forest area tenured by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to the local People's Organisation (PO), San Rafael Tanabag and Concepcion Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. CIFOR's second site is in an area tenured to the Basac Upland Farmers Association Inc in Barangay Basac, Bukidnon, within a protected area of Mount Kitanglad in North Mindanao.

The ACM research program also has sites in Indonesia, Nepal, Kyrgizstan, Cameroon, Ghana, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Brazil and Bolivia.

ACM Sites



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Donor community support

ACM's impact and success in improving sustainable forest management and the livelihoods of those who depend on forests would not have been achieved without the vision and support of Asian Development Bank.

Outside the Philippines, ACM research is supported by the European Union, UK Department for International Development, International Development Research Centre, World Resources Institute, U.S. Agency for International Development, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and CIFOR.

For further information, please contact:
ACM Palawan: Maria Cristina Lorenzo
Email: *mcblorenzo@hotmail.com*
ACM Lantapan: Linda M. Burton
Email: *lburton@xu.edu.ph* or *e_burton2001@yahoo.com*
Philippine Country Coordinator: Herlina Hartanto
Email: *h.hartanto@cgiar.org*
Or visit our website at www.cifor.cgiar.org/acm

Center for International Forestry Research
P.O.Box 6596 JKPWB, Jakarta 10065, Indonesia

CIFOR is one of the 16 Future Harvest centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

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CIFOR - Forests for the future

Adaptive Collaborative Management of forests in the Philippines





Despite substantial international support for forest management over the past few decades, forests remain neglected, degraded and cleared. Meanwhile the livelihoods of those who use forests, especially those living at the margins of rural society, have not improved. The reasons for this are complex and myriad, but it is possible to identify several recurring themes in forests around the world, including:

- The domination of decision making processes by an elite minority and the exclusion of those less privileged.
- Scant support for the participation of community members and other institutions involved with the environment and development.
- A lack of the resources and skills needed for effective forest resource management.
- Social, economic and political conditions that work against local forest management.

It is against this backdrop that CIFOR and local partners in the Philippines have implemented a pioneering approach to forest research known as Adaptive Collaborative Management (ACM). Through its ACM work in the Philippines and around the world, CIFOR is enhancing the effectiveness of Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) by evaluating how stakeholder collaboration can best produce lasting gains for local communities and their forests.

Adaptive Collaborative Management

ACM helps forest stakeholders to overcome their often conflicting interests and to collaborate in forest management planning. It encourages stakeholders to work in partnership and negotiate while mutually learning about the impacts of their respective actions. In this way they can continuously improve the benefits they receive from forests while still sustaining forest resources and, ultimately, enhance the well-being of all parties involved.

Three research questions underpin ACM:

1. *Under what conditions* can collaboration and adaptive management among stakeholders in forest management lead to both improved human well-being and the maintenance of forest resources?
2. *What approaches, strategies, and tools,* centered on social learning and collaboration, can encourage local people and stakeholders to sustainably use and manage the forests?
3. *What social, economic, political and ecological effects* occur as a result of collaborative and adaptive management processes, and why?

The key strategies in ACM's participatory action research include joint planning and collective action, mutual learning, social skills development, developing and using local indicators and collaborative monitoring arrangements.

ACM achieving impact

ACM is making a positive impact on forests and forest stakeholders. At the government level, policy makers are now working with community representatives to find alternatives to policies that hinder effective CBFM implementation. At the community level, where CBFM is overseen by *People's Organizations* (PO), there has been an increase in the income POs can generate from lumber, non-timber forest materials and finished products. ACM is also helping POs to develop professional skills in negotiating, information sharing, proposal writing, public communications and small-enterprise management.



Another important indicator of ACM's success has been the measurable increase in the number of PO members, community groups and other key stakeholders participating in democratic decision-making and planning processes. Cooperation has increased between all parties in a range of areas, including setting up nurseries, monitoring illegal activities and resolving boundary disputes.

ACM has also increased the capacity of POs and community groups to use their own indicators and monitor their own sustainable forest management practices. Its holistic methodology allows PO members and community groups to look at non-forestry livelihood initiatives, such as the increasing number of women groups planting herb gardens, producing herbal medicines and experimenting with a range of income generating activities.

The positive impact of CIFOR's ACM work is not restricted to the Philippines. Similar benefits are accruing to forest stakeholders in nine other countries where CIFOR undertakes ACM research. In Nepal, two community groups using ACM approaches were recently awarded district prizes for their achievements in community forest management. In Indonesia, ACM is seen as critical to the smooth implementation of the Government's newly announced *social forestry* policy.

ACM partners

CIFOR's ACM researchers work with partners at a range of levels within the private and public sectors. It liaises closely with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and with a variety of village, regional and provincial government agencies. CIFOR's partners also include universities, research institutions, Non-Government Organizations, People's Organizations and community groups.