

## Who We Are

The Non-Timber Forest Products - Task Force is a collaborative network of Philippine grassroots-based non-government organizations and Peoples Organizations. The Task Force was established to address the emerging livelihood needs of upland forest peoples, particularly those who depend on NTFPs. The Task Force focuses on NTFP development and management issues in the context of sustainable tropical forest management.

We promote NTFP development that:

- does not adversely affect cultures and traditions
- empowers and strengthens communities to be effective stewards of natural resources
- uses appropriate technology and incorporates indigenous knowledge systems and practices whenever suitable
- strikes a balance between economic development and ecological conservation
- recognizes women as vital partners in NTFP development

### Our Vision

We envision a sustainable forest environment and quality life for forest-based communities.

### Our Mission

We work with local NGOs and POs to help empower forest-based communities by developing culturally appropriate, sustainable NTFP-based livelihoods and community-supportive resource management policies.

### Our Objectives

1. To advocate for a policy framework that supports and responds to sustainable community resource management practices
2. To provide opportunities to increase income and social and environmental benefits of forest-based communities through sustainable livelihood initiatives
3. To establish a strong, sustainable and viable network of community-based resource management practitioners and advocates composed of POs and NGOs cooperating towards forest conservation and sustainable livelihoods

## Our Partners

We are a network of several organizations across the Philippine archipelago:

- Agtulanon Mintapod Higaonon Cumadon (AGMIHICU)
- Broad Initiatives for Negros Development (BIND)
- Enterprise Works Worldwide (EWW)
- Father Vincent Cullen Tulagan Learning and Development Center (FVCTLDC)
- Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF)
- Kapulungan ng mga Mangyan para sa Lupaing Ninuno (KPLN)
- Mangyan Mission
- Nagkakaisang Mga Tribu ng Palawan (NATRIPAL)
- Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Mangyan Alangan (SANAMA)
- Upland NGO Assistance Committee (UNAC)
- Upland Marketing Foundation, Inc. (UMFI)

# Non-Timber Forest Products Task Force



Non-timber forest products have gained substantial global interest in recent years due to the increasing recognition of their strategic potential in achieving environmental objectives such as the conservation of biological diversity.  
-FAO, 2002

We work closely with the Non-Timber Forest Products Exchange Programme for South and Southeast Asia (NTFP-EP). This Exchange Programme is a regional network that strengthens the capacities of local communities on sustainable forest management. It focuses on facilitating information exchange, providing exposure opportunities, and assists in building linkages with partners and resource organizations. Its regional partners include organizations from Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, India, Cambodia and the Philippines.



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### What are NTFPs?

Non-timber forest products or NTFPs are all the biological resources we get from forests, other than timber. If you use products like honey, herbs and spices, bamboo, rattan and essential oils, then you belong to the eight out of ten people in developing countries (including millions in rural Asia) who use NTFPs in their homes and for their livelihood (FAO, 2002).

Examples of NTFPs are:

- edible plants and animals such as honey, fruits, herbs and spices, nuts, mushrooms, fodder, cooking oils, fish, aquatic invertebrates, insects, and terrestrial wildlife
- non-edible plants and animals such as rattan, bamboo, resin, natural dyes, essential oils, ornamental plants, fiber, gums, herbal medicines, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics.

# What We Do

## 🌿 Resource Management

While NTFPs are used for food, housing, medicine and trade, they have a critical role in ecosystems as well. We envision the sustainable use of NTFPs to ensure both ecological balance and sufficient production for subsistence and commercial needs.

In remaining natural forests, NTFP-TF promotes sustainable harvest and management techniques. We also promote participatory resource monitoring initiatives in ensuring the sustainability of critical NTFPs. Replanting efforts are done at the village level to ensure the propagation and conservation of NTFPs used as raw materials for livelihood (e.g., natural dyes, rattan, and fibers). With the vision of expanding existing natural forests, NTFP-TF promotes “rainforestation” as a primary reforestation technology by utilizing endemic species in developing diverse forests both for production and conservation purposes.

NTFP-TF especially works on promoting sustainable extraction methods of forest honey from native bee species.



## 🌿 Network Development and Information Exchange

Indigenous communities and their grassroots NGO partners are often isolated from information centers and communication technology. We serve as the network hub, disseminating critical information to our partners in rural and upland areas.

We document the good practices and model interventions of our partners

and partner communities in the sustainable management of NTFPs and other related initiatives. We release a semi-annual newsletter, *Not by Timber Alone*, which features partners’ activities and discussions on NTFPs and related issues. We also prepare manuals/primers for local audiences.

We organize national meetings and fora to provide the venue for further exchange of ideas and consensus building on common initiatives and advocacy points. We also facilitate the sharing of learning experiences and organize technical training for NGO practitioners and community members in forest management.

## 🌿 Community-Based Enterprises and Marketing

Many of our partner organizations and their community groups are developing local livelihoods, including handicrafts and food-based enterprises.

We have organized and strengthened crafts-based community enterprises in some of our partner communities.

To support these community-based initiatives, we established the CustomMade Crafts Center ([www.cmcrafts.org](http://www.cmcrafts.org)) that serves as the integrated marketing arm and design center for the crafts program. The Center takes the lead in product development, design, assembly, finishing and marketing. It also takes a proactive approach to marketing by creating and penetrating new markets through product adaptation, product diversification and branding. Its products cater to a wide range of market segments, including the niches for high-end fashion and home accessories, conference kits and gifts. Most products are sold domestically but some products are also being exported to Europe, the United States and Japan. CMCC employs the principles of fair trade, cultural respect and environmental sustainability in its work.

We provide business development services including training and mentoring on financial management, business planning, strategic marketing, and others.

We collaborate and draw guidance from our well-established marketing partner, the Upland Marketing Foundation, Inc. (UMFI). In cooperation with UMFI we conduct capacity building, enterprise development and market research on various NTFPs such as food and personal care products.



## 🌿 Policy Advocacy

We believe that the recognition of rights to land and resource utilization can strengthen the bargaining power and optimize economic returns for forest user groups and indigenous people. Moreover, security to resource use is an important incentive to sustainable forest management.

We seek to address the problem of NTFP enterprises losing out on benefits that go to other players in the trade chain. We lobby and negotiate for resource access rights for forest user groups; strategically promote people-centered and ecologically sound policies and programs with the government and other sectors; and assist groups in the official delineation and recognition of ancestral domains and other tenurial or usufruct instruments.

We accomplish all these through the conduct of policy fora, trainings on lobbying and advocacy and policy research.

