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“Solidarity in a competing world —
fair use of resources”

Decoding Fairness in the Value Chain of the Tagbanua Wild Honey Community Forestry Enterprise

DENISE MARGARET MATIAS

*University of Bonn, Center for Development Research (ZEF), Dept. of Ecology and Natural Resources
Management, Germany*

Abstract

Indigenous Tagbanuas in the Philippines are one of the hunter gatherers of the non-timber forest product wild honey in the country. The Tagbanuas have been gathering honey from giant honey bees (*Apis dorsata*) since time immemorial for personal consumption. When a market for wild honey has opened in the early 1980s, they started to gather wild honey for the purpose of selling. This practice has been formally organised into a community forestry enterprise through the help of non-government organisations (NGO). The Tagbanua community of Aborlan is one of the biggest suppliers of wild honey combs to the NGO Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan (United Tribes of Palawan). NATRIPAL buys the honey combs from the indigenous Tagbanua and thereafter processes the honey combs into filtered honey and beeswax blocks which they sell on both wholesale and retail bases. One of the sustainability research questions for the wild honey enterprise is the quality of its economic contribution to the lives of indigenous Tagbanua. A value chain analysis of the 2015 harvest and sales record of the Tagbanua was conducted vis-à-vis a qualitative assessment of the value addition functions of each actor in the value chain in order to understand which value chain actor or value addition function captures the most economic value. This mixed methods research provided substantial insight on how fairly or unfairly compensated each of the value chain actors was. Preliminary results show that the compensation for indigenous honey hunters is not commensurate to their intensity of work compared to the other value chain actors. This presentation argues that the principle of fairness in a rural enterprise must not only be analysed within the context of horizontal actors but also with vertical actors.

Keywords: Forest honey, indigenous honey hunting, non-timber forest product, value chain analysis