ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE
FOR ECOLOGICAL AND HUMAN WELLBEING:
Cases of Forest Protected Areas in the Philippines

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DECLARATION

Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is the result of original work carried out by the author.

Maria Noelyn Dano
I may have driven the process in my PhD journey, but there are a number of people behind its fruition. To them, I am sincerely thankful.

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ABSTRACT

The increasing recognition that forest loss leads to profound negative costs to society in terms of forgone goods and services has reinforced the exigency to protect the forests. While on one hand, the sustainability of essential ecological processes and life support systems in forest areas is threatened, on the other hand, the security of a just and dignified livelihood of the people living in and around forests and protected areas is at stake. Reconciling claims from ecological and social systems immediately leads us to face issues of politics and 'governance' – the structures and processes by which societies share power, shape individual and collective actions (Young 1992).

Employing a comparative case study of three forest protected areas in the Philippines, the thesis addresses the central question: “What forest governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing?” The cases examined are the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park, and the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park. I chose them because of their significance in terms of biological diversity, as well as on their differences in governance approaches. They are among the 10 priority protected areas in the country identified as highly significant for biodiversity conservation. They are all characterized by the presence of indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples. And all are sites of environment and development programs carried out with the two-pronged goal of biodiversity protection and rural development; as such, they have all been initially provided with major funding support from global actors. The three cases are, in theory, all under a decentralized government-coordinated multi-stakeholders governance system; this is, however, muddled in practice. They exhibit variations in their modes of governing. On what appears to be a dominant characteristic, the Sierra Madre case is more ‘donor-driven’; the Kitanglad more ‘networked’; and the Kanlaon is relatively ‘state-dominated’. In examining how the attributes of governance arrangements and processes influence the capacity of the social-ecological systems in addressing conservation and development goals, I use the following criteria: 1) Legitimacy, 2) Accountability, 3) Cost-efficiency, 4) Coordination, and 5) Resilience.

The thesis finds that legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency in decision-making, coordination, and resilience are mutually reinforcing in their performance as forest governance features promoting distributive justice, livelihood protection, ecosystem protection, and sustainability – core values for ecological and human wellbeing. When faced with tensions and trade-offs, the deliberative nature of a networked governance mechanism is instrumental in turning these tensions into synergies for collective actions.
A legitimacy deficit that is common in governance networks can be addressed by a system that is conceptualized to employ discursive engagements in both the public and the empowered spaces, aided by a bridging institution in terms of transmission and accountability; and substantiated by discursive representation in cases when descriptive representation proves to be infeasible, limiting, and/or unjust. The overall analyses of the findings suggest that effective networked governance involving state and non-state actors that works for both forests and people is one that is polycentric, collaborative, and discursive, operating in a deliberative system. This system of environmental governance also creates an enabling setting for a just and sustainable society to thrive.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACC  Annual Allowable Cut
AFN  Asia Forest Network
ASEAN Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BENRO Bukidnon Environment and Natural Resource Office
BFD  Bureau of Forest Development
CBCP Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
CBFE Community and Smallholder Forest Management and Enterprises
CBFM Community-Based Forest Management
CFP  Community Forestry Programme
CI  Conservation International
CIC  Cagayan-Iligan Corridor
CoE  Council of Elders
CPPAP Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project
DA  Department of Agriculture
DOE  Department of Energy
DENR Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DTI  Department of Trade and Industry
EDC  Energy Development Corporation
FGLG Forest Governance Learning Group
GEF  Global Environment Facility
IPRA Indigenous People’s Right Act
IPAF Integrated Protected Areas Fund
IEC  Information and Education Campaign
IRR  Implementing Rules and Regulations
IPRA Indigenous People’s Right Act
IPAS Integrated Protected Areas System
IRA  Internal Revenue Allotment
ICRAF International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
IIEED International Institute for Environment and Development
IUFRO International Union of Forest Research Organisations
KGB  Kanlaon Green Brigade
KGV  Kitanglad Guard Volunteers
KIN  Kitanglad Integrated NGOs
LGC  Local Government Code
LGU  Local Government Units
MOA  Memorandum of Agreement
M&E  Monitoring and Evaluation
MKNP Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park
MKRNP Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park
MKAETDC Mt. Kitanglad Agri-Ecological Techno-Demo Center
MUAD Multi-Sectoral Alliance for Development (in Negros)
NCIP National Commission on Indigenous Peoples
NGA  National Government Agency
NGO  Non-Government Organization
NIPAS National Integrated Protected Areas System
NIPAP National Integrated Protected Areas Program
NRMDP Natural Resource Management and Development Planning
NEW Negros Environment Watch
NPA New People’s Army
NNGP Northern Negros Geothermal Power Plant
NSMNP Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park
Payment for Environmental Services
Peoples Organizations
Philippines National Oil Company-Energy Development Corporation
Preventive Systems Approach
Protected Area
Protected Area Management Board
Protected Area Superintendent
Provincial Environment and Resource Officer
People’s Organization
Reduced Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
Save Mt. Kanlaon Coalition
Timber Licensing Agreement
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Environment Programme
World Wildlife Fund
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

The increasing recognition that forest loss leads to profound negative costs to society in terms of forgone goods and services has reinforced the exigency to protect the forests. While on one hand, the sustainability of essential ecological processes and life support systems in forest areas is threatened, on the other hand, the security of a just and dignified livelihood of the people living in and around forests and protected areas is at stake. Reconciling claims from ecological and social systems immediately leads us to face issues of politics and ‘governance’ – the structures and processes by which societies share power, and shape individual and collective actions (Young 1992). The question therefore arises, “What forest governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing?” This is the central question of my PhD project which I will answer by employing a comparative case study of three forest protected areas in the Philippines. This research is particularly relevant in addressing the forest sustainability and human security dilemma in the context of the Philippines, which faces the daunting task of uplifting the forest dependent poor while at the same time conserving its forests. The dilemma is not unique to the Philippines, and so there should be lessons from the cases I examine for situations elsewhere in the world.

Forest governance proceeds in the context of interdependent ecological and social systems. It becomes problematic when the actors’ differing and often competing interests and values produce tensions and tradeoffs. It is the manner by which people exercise authority over nature through various mechanisms that determine allocation and access of natural resources and whether or not forest management and conservation activities generate positive or negative impacts on forests and people. The prime importance of governance in influencing forest outcomes is widely recognized in the literature (see for example Agrawal et al. 2008; Sayer and Collins 2012; Sikor et al. 2010; World Bank 2009), but scholars argue that there are “major gaps in the understanding of how different features of governance affect outcomes”
(Agrawal et al. 2008 p.1461). The challenge in trying to understand the coupled social and ecological systems that all forest governance represents "urgently needs more emphasis and attention than it has received until now" (Agrawal et al. 2008 p.1461).

While a body of literature discusses how to effectively conserve natural resources, as well as how to meet the development needs of the affected peoples, addressing these objectives in a more integrated and interdependent fashion is an increasingly challenging and important task. Both ecological and social systems are heavily influenced by intertwined governance structures and processes that either, mitigate, maintain, or aggravate a complex ecological problem. This research endeavours to shed light on what kind of forest governance system will enable better outcomes to be achieved. One of the propositions I test is that polycentric, collaborative governance leads to better performance in both ecological and social terms (see Lebel et al. 2006; Innes and Booher 2003).

This chapter begins by presenting the background of the Philippines forests, policies, and people. An overview on the use of case studies follows. The chapter concludes with structure of the thesis.

2. Traversing the Philippines Forests' Socio-Ecological Landscape

The Philippines is an archipelago of over 7000 islands with a total land area of 29.8 million hectares, and a population of over 94 million people (World Bank 2011). Its forests have potentially high ecological and human life-support values, but as the following discussions demonstrate, they have been degraded over time. The country contains "one of the highest levels of diversity and endemicity of life forms and some of the most unique habitats in the world", but is now experiencing a very high rate of biodiversity loss (Wood et al. 2000; IUCN 2011).

1It hosts 40,000 species of existing wildlife (Wood et al. 2000). It is home to an estimated 38,600 forest-dependent species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish. Of these, 33 species of mammals, 57 birds, 28 reptiles, 48 amphibians, 1 fish, 8 arthropods and 31 plants found in forests are listed as critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable on the IUCN red list of threatened species (IUCN 2011).
The Philippines has been among the Southeast Asian countries displaying a high rate of deforestation for many decades now. Historically, it was the first major log-producing country in Asia. In the early 1950s, it was South East Asia’s largest timber exporter, joined by Malaysia a few years later and by Indonesia around 1965 (see van den Top 2003). During the 1965-1975 logging boom in the country, recorded timber extraction from its natural mixed dipterocarp forests peaked at 10-15 million m$^3$ in 1969, generating foreign exchange earnings of over US$300 million. In the same year, logs and lumber were the biggest single export earner for the Philippines, delivering 33 per cent of total exports. However, the forests reached a point of near depletion in the later 1980s: and the number of corporate logging concessions in the country had significantly decreased, from 154 to 31 between 1987 and 1994. In 1998, the Philippines became the world’s eighth largest importer of tropical hardwoods, spending US$165 million per year to buy 700,000 m$^3$ of logs in the international markets.

The significant decline in the country’s forest industry is reflected in its forest loss. Forest covered about 90 per cent of the total land area when the Spaniards first came to the Philippines in 1521; it had decreased to nearly 70 per cent by 1900, 49 per cent by 1950 and 18 per cent by 1994 (Environment Management Bureau 1996). Indigenous forests now cover less than 8.6 per cent of total land mass; the drop in forest cover from 70 per cent at the start of the 20th century has been described as one of the most rapid forest losses over the past decades recorded anywhere in the world (Heaney 2007 in Mayo-Anda 2011). The present deforestation rate is 55,000 hectares per year, and the extent of the remaining forests is 7,665,000 hectares (FAO 2011) with primary forests covering an area of 800,000 ha (Tan 2001 in Romero 2006).

Some scholars cite evidence for an exploitation phase lasting over a century in the country; such phase is characterized by a government mainly concerned with maximizing revenue from logging timber or with promoting agricultural expansion,

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2 A net increase in forest area reported at the regional level in Asia-Pacific notwithstanding, Southeast Asian countries experienced the largest decline in forests area in the last 10 years, with an annual net loss of more than 0.9 million hectares despite the fact that it has the highest percentage of forest within protected areas in the region in the same period (FAO 2011). It is estimated that Southeast Asia alone was responsible for 12% of the world’s total greenhouse gas emissions in 2000, with emissions rising twice as fast as the global average during 1990-2000. Land use change, including deforestation, accordingly accounts for 75% of this sub-region’s greenhouse gas emissions. It is posited that any effort to limit the region’s carbon footprint cannot gain credence without strong attention to this source (ADB 2010).
and exploitation as the main goal of both stated and actual policies (Grainger and Malayang 2006). Pulhin (2002) argues that forest policy in the Philippines has been continuously revised to suit the changing priorities and needs of the country in relation to the goods and services provided by the forests. As in most tropical forests, government intervention plays a crucial role, having classified all forest land in the country under its jurisdiction. From Asia’s most bountiful provider of rainforest timber during the 20th century, to a net importer of timber, the country’s record of one of the highest deforestation rates in the world can be linked to the history of its forest policy trends. Analyses from other researchers also argue that agricultural expansion, economic development policy (Romero 2006), weak enforcement of existing forestry laws, mismanagement, and abuses including corruption (Mayo-Anda 2011; also Dahal and Capistrano 2006) are the key drivers of the country’s deforestation.

Forest Ecosystem Sustainability and Socio-Economic Security Nexus

Considering the scale of forest loss experienced by the Philippines in the past 50 years, and the gravity of several natural disasters that its people attribute to this deforestation, there have been increasing calls for forest protection including a total logging ban. With this has come a re-visioning of forests as much more than a source of timber, giving more recognition of the ecological services they provide and the traditional forest-based cultures they can sustain (Changchui 2008). At present, the country’s remaining forests continue to be a significant source of socio-economic value. Beyond the government revenues that the sector generates, many people still depend on forests for livelihoods; food security and survival are a fundamental part of the relationship of millions of Filipinos with the environment (Walpole 2008). An estimated one-third of the country’s population lives below the poverty line; about 25 million Filipinos live in upland areas, half of them occupying forestlands and dependent on them for subsistence uses as well as traditional and customary lifestyles. Among the country’s least advantaged populace are the 12 million

The Colonial period’s (1521-1945) introduction of the Regalian Doctrine during the Spanish era paved the way for mechanized logging during the American rule. Severe deforestation continued with the entry of the Japanese, with the country’s forest resources being heavily exploited for war purposes. The granting of timber license agreements (TLAs) in the post-colonial period (1946-1970s) saw the Philippines’ forest decline heading the list of countries within the Asia-Pacific region under the Marcos regime (1965-1986). There has been a policy shift towards local participation from the late 1980s to the present (Pulhin 2002; see also La Vina et al. 2010).
indigenous peoples who live in various forest, lowland, and coastal areas. Both non-indigenous and indigenous peoples in many forest areas have limited means of earning cash and a substantial number of them therefore engage in unregistered logging or rattan extraction (Blaser et al. 2011). In the Philippines, like in many other countries in Southeast Asia, poverty is largely at the center of the continuity of illegal forest activities (Inoguchi et al. 2005).

Many people also look to the Philippines’ forests for their conservation values: their roles in maintaining biodiversity, providing water, improving air quality, protection against flooding and landslides, and mitigating climate change. Given the receding biodiversity in the country, forest conservation has been a key objective in many efforts, including the declaration of forest protected areas (PAs). In the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992, protected areas are defined as “identified portions of land and water set aside by reason of their unique physical and biological significance, managed to enhance biological diversity and protected against destructive human exploitation”. Considering both the NIPAS Act and its Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations, the primary goal of protected area establishment is biodiversity conservation (especially endemic species) in the context of sustainable development (La Vina et al. 2010).

More recently, along with the growing international consensus that policies to address climate change must include measures to curb deforestation, is an increasing interest from the country in participating in the ‘reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation’ (REDD) mechanism. Philippine forests have been sources of carbon (C) emissions as a result of deforestation in the past, but research has shown that they could be net sinks of C in the present and in the future (Lasco and Pulhin 2000). The country has a relatively high potential for the enhancement of carbon sinks (Blaser et al. 2011).

From what was initially put forward as primarily a means of mitigating climate change by avoiding deforestation, other expectations associated with REDD such as poverty reduction are steadily rising. As a participant in UN REDD and the REDD+

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4 This is close to IUCN’s current definition of a protected area, which is a ‘clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values’ (IUCN 2012), although the latter is explicit in its recognition of the cultural dimension of nature.
Partnership, the country’s REDD process is designed as a mechanism which goes beyond the aim of increasing carbon stocks. It emphasizes “delivering co-benefits such as biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration and equitable benefit sharing” (Blaser et al. 2011 p.238). The government and civil society are collaborating to develop the ‘Philippine National REDD+ Strategy’, combining forest protection with objectives on ecological values and improvements in local livelihoods (Mayo-Anda 2011).

Integrating livelihood objectives is particularly significant in the country’s context given that the main factor hindering its climate change mainstreaming in key development plans and programs in the recent past, was its national priorities’ bias towards more pressing concerns associated with poverty issues (Lasco et al. 2008). The country has a per capita income of only $3,513 a year (FAO 2011), and it ranks 112th in the world in the human development index (UNDP 2011). REDD+ is seen by many development and funding agencies to offer “an important new approach to both climate change mitigation and the financing of sustainable rural development” in the forested countries of the region, recognizing ecosystem service valuation as needed to curb Asian deforestation (ADB 2010; Win 2011). Even with the Philippines’s current enthusiasm for REDD+, what could look most attractive if viewed through local people’s lenses, is not necessarily the idea of carbon mitigation from avoided further forest loss and forest degradation, but rather the perceived potential for rural development attached to an environmental aim.

*Forest Conservation and Poverty Reduction as a Challenge*

Reconciling ecological and livelihood values in aiming for forest conservation and poverty reduction, respectively, has been, and is still, a problem. This has already been a theme in many efforts in the Philippines, especially following the 1986 EDSA revolution and the demise of the Marcos regime when a strong social and environmental movement pushed for drastic reforms in policies regarding natural resource extraction, indigenous peoples’ rights and biodiversity conservation. The concept of ‘decentralization, people’s participation and recognition of the socio-political dimension of forestry moved into mainstream of policy formulation’. Both the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claims and the NIPAS Act of 1992 were enacted. In 1993, the Community Forestry Programme (CFP) was established which
recognized that upland poverty alleviation, social justice and equity in resource distribution, and forest sustainability can be achieved through community forestry’. In 1995, the community-based forest management (CBFM) programme was institutionalized, and in 1996 was established as the ‘national strategy for sustainable forest management and social equity in the Philippine uplands’ (Pulhin 2002; see also Walpole et al. 1993). CBFM has now covered an area of around 5.7 million hectares of forest land, involving 496,000 households (DENR 2001 in Grainger and Malayang 2006). Such efforts at decentralizing environmental management in the Philippines have contributed to democratization by changing relationships between villages, local and provincial governments and the state. Whether or not this development has contributed to good outcomes in both ecological and social terms is, however, a different story. Despite the country’s decentralization program being carefully prepared, well documented, and generally based on sound principles, the record of implementation has been mixed, exhibiting both gain and damage to the environment (Utting 2000).

The twin goals of forest conservation and poverty alleviation are also at the core of several external interventions. Global factors affect decisions and actions relating to the country’s forest utilization and management. Provision of funds and technical support serve as the international funding institutions’ instruments of influence (Pulhin 2002), instruments that have contributed to shaping how state and civil society partnerships manage national parks. Two relatively recent innovations in protected area establishment which were driven by international funders and the national government in 1980s-1990s were the Integrated Protected Areas System (IPAS), and the National Integrated Protected Areas Program (NIPAP). The IPAS was specifically aimed to (1) conserve the integrity of ecosystems to sustain resource productivity and (2) safeguard the culture and wellbeing of cultural communities situated in the national integrated protected area system. Worth noting is that the IPAS was contained in the national conservation strategy that sought to identify, designate, and protect ‘biodiversity hot spots’ (World Bank 1989). The Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development was used as IPAS’ policy and legal framework, and thereafter, the NIPAS Act took effect in 1992. Despite such an enabling policy environment in addressing both environmental and developmental goals, Dressler (2009) argues that during phase 1 of the establishment of the IPAS,
the Act’s “priority was to protect biodiversity and forests at the expense of indigenous rights”.

The Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project (CPPAP) constitutes phase 2 of the IPAS establishment. Supporting the project was a World Bank Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant of US$20 million, which lasted from 1994 until 2002. It was geared towards the following objectives: protecting ten priority areas of high biodiversity value; improving protected area management through strengthening the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR); incorporating local people into the management structure; and establishing permanent funding mechanisms; confirming the tenure of indigenous cultural communities; and developing sustainable forms of livelihood consistent with biodiversity protection (World Bank 1994). Its overall goal is to improve both ecological and social systems in selected forest protected areas for the benefit of forests and people. Anchored in the institutional framework of the NIPAS Act, the project brought representatives of central and local governments, NGOs, and indigenous cultural communities together under a ‘partnership’ constituting the Protected Area Management Boards, or PAMBs which are authorized by law to make management decisions for the individual Protected Areas (PAs). The PAMB can be seen as a form of institutionalized participation of non-state actors in a government-hosted forest governance mechanism. The multi-stakeholder nature of the membership of this key governing body implies its potential to be more inclusive in accommodating interests and views, a function which is vital in environmental decision-making. As the case studies in the following chapters reveal, however, this does not guarantee good performance, with some protected areas showing disastrous outcomes.

More than 14 years have passed since the NIPAS Act came into force. In terms of results from associated projects on ecological wellbeing, some researchers argue that despite investments by government agencies, other non-state organizations, international development banks and other global donors, forest cover and other important habitats in the country continue to decline, and such rapid deforestation points to significant loss of biodiversity (Wood et al. 2000). Foreign money and fast tracking reforestation in the past have led to poor outcomes. As Walpole (2008) posits, “no one says there is an increase in real forest cover in the Philippines. Maybe
there is an increase in the number of trees, but it is not the forest we idealize, romanticize, log, or even live in". Looking into the human dimension on the other hand, we note that the IPAS objectives sought to conserve forests while safeguarding the culture and wellbeing of cultural communities in the protected areas system. Although this policy shift was unprecedented and cause for optimism, considerable uncertainty remains over whether such policies could be properly implemented on the ground (Dressler et al 2006); and again, the last decade has shown that a great number of initiatives have not succeeded in making policies and their implementation work for both forests and people.

There are 244 formally declared protected areas in the Philippines, comprising 3,225,777 ha (Global Forest Watch 2002) of large natural parks, landscapes and seascapes, wildlife sanctuaries and small watersheds, although according to Senga (2001), fewer than a quarter of these receive some form of protection either through foreign funding or local initiatives. Coxhead (2002 in Verburg et al. 2006) observe that even in cases when most forestry activities are barred from the protected areas, the government has been ambivalent in enforcing these laws, partly due to the higher priority given to economic growth. Poor local communities are often at the crossroads of these competing interests; their needs and other circumstances are either sacrificed, or used in strengthening a justification behind the prioritization of national development agendas as well as global goals without genuinely addressing their own.

With the growing recognition of the significance of civil society's involvement and local participation in resource management, community-based and other decentralized approaches have been introduced in many initiatives, from the earlier implementation of the NIPAS, the CBFM program, to the more recent REDD+. All these are designed to reconcile ecological and livelihood values. The Philippines experience, however, shows that using state-led protected areas or community-managed forests is not a panacea. Several scholars highlight some gloomy scenarios or uncertainties in their implementation (Utting 2000; Pulhin 2002, Walpole 2008). While there are some success stories one can hear around the country such as one that shows empowerment among smallholder farmers in managing their natural resources for example (AFN 2003), effectiveness of various strategies in shaping collective outcomes for both ecological and human wellbeing remains a big question both in theory and in practice. This difficulty is yet to be resolved and so problematic
governance and poor outcomes continue on a large scale. Given the challenges faced and the prospects that community-managed areas in general hold, some scholars strongly suggest that further research and development efforts are necessary to identify and address the existing obstacles holding back the implementation of sustainable management practices in a community context (Porter-Bolland et al. 2011). The Philippines is not alone in this, so there should be lessons from what I find that are applicable elsewhere in the world.

Finding the institutional arrangements that can work for both environment and development goals in a conservation mechanism can indeed be a daunting task. Lessons from failures in some past initiatives, however, point to the necessity of incorporating these twin goals along with meaningful and transformative community engagements. Massive deforestation has depleted the once lush tropical rainforests of the Philippines, but like many other developing countries, it faces the big challenge of meeting the needs of its poor while preserving its natural resource base. To address both these objectives, forest protection and poverty alleviation, the Philippines has tried and tested participatory, people-centred, and community-based approaches in different ways and settings. Despite the country’s relatively long experience in decentralized programs, successful forest management and conservation have never been guaranteed, with relevant projects often exhibiting some degree of both success and failure in relation to their stated objectives (Utting 2000).

The Philippines case highlights the question of what dynamics drive social actors toward good forest governance. The different features of such mechanisms need further analysis in order to better understand how social interactions are shaped and to identify the factors affecting socio-ecological outcomes. This study explores the dynamics driving forest land management and conservation in protected areas in the context of a developing country. In the Philippines, a range of policy instruments devolving authority of forest management to communities and other members of the civil society has been introduced in the last three decades (see Edmunds and Wollenberg 2001; Pulhin 2002). Local community involvement is now a common feature even in management of protected areas. The long and diverse experiences of the country in experimenting with concepts and practices of decentralization, community forestry, and ‘people-centred development’ in the forestry sector, provide
a fertile ground from which I draw several cases exhibiting different governance modes, and providing ample scope for deeper understanding of the forest protection–rural development interface for ecological and human wellbeing.

3. Use of Case Studies

In Chapter 3, I examine the use of the case study method in detail. I employ case studies to investigate what governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing within particular ecological settings and social configurations. I have chosen three forest protected areas in the Philippines (Figure 1), namely: the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park in the North, Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park in the South, and Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park in the central part of the country.

I chose them on the bases of their significance in terms of biological diversity and their differences in governance approaches. The three are among the ten priority protected areas in the country identified as highly significant for biodiversity conservation; they are all characterized by the presence of indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples; and are sites of environment and development programs carried out with the two-pronged goal of biodiversity protection and rural development. As such, they have all been initially provided with major funding support from global actors. The three cases are, in theory, all under a decentralized government-coordinated multi-stakeholder governance system; this is however muddled in practice. They exhibit evident variations in their modes of governing. In what appears to be a dominant characteristic, the Sierra Madre case is more ‘donor-driven’; the Kitanglad more ‘networked’; and the Kanlaon is relatively ‘state-dominated’.

The three sites are all part of the National Integrated Protected Areas System. Under the NIPAS Act, one of the strategies introduced to achieve its conservation objective and promote sustainability is collaboration of all stakeholders through a functional, transparent, accountable and participatory governance mechanism (DENR 2008). This has been implemented through the management of each of the protected areas by a multi-sectoral governance body. This institutional arrangement reflects a change from the traditional hierarchical steering to a relatively decentralized and collaborative approach; from government to governance. The three cases are
supported with enabling policy that allows them to strategize from being government-centered to be more networked. The three in fact exhibit features of networked governance, but in Sierra Madre, the donors loom large; in Kanlaon, state looms large. In Kitanglad on the other hand, the extent and quality of its engagements make a networked mechanism more visible.

Beyond answering the central question of my thesis, the case studies also highlight respectively the impact of global actors' interventions on the ground, the preconditions for a networked governance mechanism to work, and the role of the state and its relationship with other actors at various levels. The Kitanglad case in particular, which illustrates networked governance, displays both its strengths and weaknesses, and suggests strategies that may counter the latter. The three cases are not meant to be a comprehensive representation of the categories to which I ascribed them, but rather, they are intended to illustrate how processes and practices can differ even in sites formally covered by the same policy instruments. To reiterate, the Sierra Madre case shows a heavy reliance on foreign-funding for support, without sufficiently integrating conservation and development efforts to local priorities and programs. The Kitanglad case exhibits a governance mechanism that is polycentric, with a multi-dimensional system employing communicative coordination as it engages both local and global actors while building its strength from local knowledge, structures, and processes. Kanlaon is a state-centric case demonstrating, among other things, that as soon as the development priorities of the government take over, effective forest governance is lost.

The thesis finds that legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency in decision-making, coordination, and resilience are mutually reinforcing in their performance as forest governance features. While resilience is contingent, particularly required in situations with severe ecological problems, a combination of legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, and coordination is a precondition in promoting distributive justice, livelihood protection, ecosystem protection, and sustainability – core values for ecological and human wellbeing. When faced with tensions and trade-offs, the deliberative nature of a networked governance mechanism is instrumental in turning these tensions into synergies for collective actions. A legitimacy deficit that is more common in governance networks, given the fluidity of the interactions, can be addressed by a system that is conceptualized to employ discursive engagements in
both public and empowered spaces, aided by a bridging institution in terms of transmission and accountability. And it is substantiated by discursive representation in cases when descriptive representation proves to be infeasible, limiting, and/or unjust; this is additionally important in the context of developing countries where local funding and other material constraints call for more innovative ways to effectively put good governance principles and theories into practice. The overall analysis of the findings suggests that effective networked governance involving state and non-state actors that works for both forests and people is one that is polycentric, collaborative, and discursive, operating in a deliberative system. This system of environmental governance treats the world as 'plural' and creates an enabling setting for a just and sustainable society to thrive, strategically avoiding equity becoming eclipsed in the process.

The section following Figure 1 below provides an overview of the thesis.
4. Thesis Outline

This research project seeks to answer what forest governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing. Reflecting this aim, the thesis has nine chapters that are grouped into four parts. **Part I** (Chapters 1-3) sets the stage. This chapter (1) has introduced the thesis by presenting the central question, a general backdrop to the forests and people at different levels, the Philippines socio-ecological landscape that highlights historical and forest policy information, and an overview on the use of case studies. Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature on governance, before presenting the analytical framework that guides this project in answering the central question. In particular, I use the concepts of legitimacy, accountability, efficiency in decision-making, coordination, and resilience as the criteria to explore what governance features best promote distributive justice, livelihood protection,
ecosystem protection, and sustainability – the core values that are aimed to be promoted by good forest governance for ecological and human wellbeing. In Chapter 3, I discuss the methodology adopted to achieve the goals of the project. I describe my research project as pragmatic in its orientation, and as both institutional and interpretative in its approach, which is compatible with the comparative case study method employed.

Part II of the thesis (Chapters 4-6) gives accounts of how forest conservation initiatives have responded to their two-pronged environment and development goal, enhancing both ecological and social systems. In each case study chapter, I first provide a brief background context, and then describe the forest governance mechanism in terms of the five governance criteria and the four core values. I then conclude each chapter with a discussion on the link between these governance features and the desired forest governance outcomes.

The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park in Chapter 4 particularly illustrates how globally-funded programs for both conservation and development can easily become overshadowed by the nuances at the local level: neglect of which has undermined socio-ecological systems. Moreover, the case highlights a warning that justifying the prioritization of economic development due to poverty does not work; nor does a dwindling forest resource make a strong case for forest protection to come first before attending to human basic needs for survival. Doing so produces tensions that hinder collective actions for both forests and people. In Chapter 5, the case of Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park shows that an effective networked conservation mechanism is one that is polycentric, with a multi-dimensional system employing communicative coordination as it engages both local and global actors. It also reveals that the increasing influence of civil society groups has not reduced the influence of the state, but has rather shifted its role from the traditional command and control to that of facilitator. On the other hand, the case of Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park in Chapter 6 highlights the challenges that civil society faces in a state-dominated governance mechanism, pointing out the role and influence of the broader political system within which the latter operates. Along with the government’s economic priority is a very strong tie between the state and industry which undermines civil society’s participation in formal policy-making arena. The case thus suggests the need for the state to lessen if not let go of its command and control approach if it is to be an
effective member-facilitator of a well-functioning multi-stakeholder governance mechanism.

**Part III** offers some comparative interpretations of the results of the three cases (Chapter 7) and presents the lessons, recommendations, and conclusions of the thesis (Chapter 8). In Chapter 7, I again use the governance criteria and core values in making the comparative case analysis. I conclude that the interactions between the governing actors and the governed in the forest governance mechanism characterized to have legitimacy, accountability, efficiency, coordination (and resilience in situations with severe ecological problem) can produce outcomes in which benefits and burdens are justly shared, and people's livelihoods and the forests are protected for a sustainable gain. As demonstrated by the case study results, innovative accountability measures facilitated by a coordinating governance mechanism that deliberates and is therefore more sensitive to issues of context and scale, provide high incentives for better sustainability performance.

Chapter 8 sums up the take-home messages from the three cases: Case 1. Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, Donor-driven: 'When local realities take a back seat'; Case 2. Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, Networked: 'Turning tensions into synergies for collective actions'; and Case 3. Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park, State-dominated: 'Development and sustainability paradox: when equity is eclipsed'. In this chapter, implications of the research findings for the theories and practice of environmental governance are drawn, and recommendations are made. I then propose a forest governance architecture for both forests and people based on the lessons from the study, and offer suggestions for further research before concluding the thesis.

5. **Concluding Remarks**

While my overall project has been presented in a nutshell, introducing its central question concerning what governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing, a substantial part of this chapter has been dedicated to providing the general context of my study. The information given that relates to the arena at the higher, down to the local level, was intended to present a holistic backdrop to what is occurring in practice at various scales. The different agendas, priorities, and other
realities are potential sources of tensions, but they can also be strategized to contribute to more effective collective actions for forests and people. From the dynamics depicted in the earlier discussions about forests management in the Philippines, I can hypothesize that producing outcomes that balance conservation objectives and local human needs calls for a multi-dimensional coordinated system whose effectiveness is determined by its extent and by the quality of the engagements at various levels; and information and communication play a vital role. Do we need the same preconditions in protecting the forest landscapes under investigation? My project utilizes case studies of forest protected areas in a country shaped by its colonial and post-colonial past, intertwined with the complexity of its present local socio-ecological systems which are not devoid of global influences. The local-national-global governance interactions in the cases and the forest-poverty nexus in the country typify the social fabric in many other places in the developing world. This study draws lessons that may not only contribute to improving local policies and practices, but can also potentially inform forest governance decisions relevant to other developing countries in the tropics.

While this chapter has given some facts and findings from earlier empirical investigations, the following chapter is more directed to providing a theoretical framework for the analysis that I will be using, to help explain what governance features best promote ecological and human wellbeing at a more localized level involving direct forest users, among others.
CHAPTER 2
FOREST GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

1. Introduction

Good forest governance lies at the intersection of environmental change, deforestation, and poverty. In order to be guided in answering the central question of the thesis which asks what governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing, it is necessary to devise a framework that clearly captures the relationships between governance features and desired outcomes. This chapter serves this purpose by laying out the criteria that I use in investigating the forest governance mechanisms, namely: legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination, and resilience. The governance criteria are interdependent as they influence outcomes gauged in terms of distributive justice, livelihood protection, ecosystem protection, and sustainability – core values to be promoted for the wellbeing of forests and people.

In this chapter, I also try to connect the thesis more closely with theories on governance in general and environmental governance in particular, with special reference to forests. To this end, I first review some of the propositions being put forward by researchers on what constitutes good governance against the backdrop of a changing political terrain in the environmental domain and beyond. Along with the shift from ‘government’ to ‘governance’ in the literature, a shift is occurring away from a state-centric command and control to governance networks in practice. Likewise, I examine and assess the viability of existing frameworks and criteria that have been proposed when evaluating how forest governance works for both forests and people; their strengths and weaknesses are useful in firming up my own formulation. I wrap up the discussions by going back to the often used (and abused) notion of ‘sustainable development’ that is helpful in contesting the dichotomy between forest sustainability and human security, or between what we call ‘ecological and human wellbeing’.

2. Governance

A shift from ‘government’ to ‘governance’ is evident in the literature. This conceptual move has captured changes in politics in a growing ‘network society’ where there is an observable rise of less hierarchical and more collaborative governance arrangements (Rosenau 1992; Rhodes 1996; Rhodes 1997; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Dryzek 2009; Backstrand et al. 2010). The term ‘governance’ has been used for a long time to mean, or in association with, ‘government’ or what governments do. The literature, however, indicates some growing discussions about governments’ lessening grip on such authority, recognizing the influence of actors other than the state (Rosenau 1992; Graham et al. 2003; Pattberg 2007; Biermann 2010).

Rosenau (1992) for example talks about ‘governance without government’, contending that “to presume the presence of governance without government is to conceive of functions that have to be performed in any viable human system irrespective of whether the system has evolved organizations and institutions explicitly charged with performing them” (Rosenau 1992 p.3). He discusses some centralizing and decentralizing dynamics that have undermined constitutions and treaties in the sense that they have contributed to the shifts in the loci of authority, positing that even if governments still operate and are still sovereign in a number of ways, some of the functions of governance are now being performed by activities that do not originate with governments. While it is true that with some changing dynamics in today’s world, many actors outside the government are now performing functions which used to be done within the ambit of the state, it does not seem to follow that the state’s influence is fading away. Rather, sources of power are becoming more spread, especially with the emergence of governance networks. Along these lines, Rhodes contends that it “is not the end of state authority per se but the redefinition of it, characterized by a much more open mind allowing much more diversity and experimentation” (2000 in Hajer and Wagenaar 2003 p.5).

Definitions and uses of ‘governance’ are as varied as the issues and the levels of analysis to which the concept is applied. Governance can universally be defined by the dispersal of political authority in the dimensions of geography, function, resource, interests, norms, decision-making, and policy implementation; together they help to
distinguish governance from government as the ideal concept of ‘centralized political authority’ (Krahmann 2003 p.323). Although ‘governance’ is not uniformly defined in the social sciences, it usually signifies new forms of regulation that differ from traditional hierarchical state activity and implies some form of self-regulation by social actors, private-public co-operation in the solving of societal problems, and new forms of multi-level policy (Biermann 2007 p.328). Rhodes refers to ‘self-organizing, interorganizational networks’ which “complement markets and hierarchies as governing structures for authoritatively allocating resources and exercising control and co-ordination” (Rhodes 1996 p.652). While I agree that governance as implied above is a kind of regulation that differs from the conventional one performed centrally by the state, I consider the latter as part of it, formally or informally. I then define governance as the state and/or non-state actors’ shaping of individual and collective actions through the use of institutional arrangements, decision-making processes and discourses.

2.1 Environmental Governance

Some researchers highlight the hybrid, multilevel, and cross-sectoral nature of emerging modes of governance across the conventional state-market-community divides. An example of these is co-management as a form of collaboration between state agencies and communities, public-private partnerships between state agencies and market actors, and social-private partnerships between market actors and communities. They claim that these forms of governance suggest that the state is not the only, and perhaps not even the most important actor in governance (see Lemos and Agrawal 2006). Putting forward adaptive co-management as one approach suited to conditions of uncertainty and conflict, linking learning and collaboration to facilitate effective governance, Armitage et al. (2009) also argue that ‘command-and-control’ resource management is limited in a complex and changing world. It is true that ‘command and control’ is no longer a widely favored approach when it comes to managing the environment, and that in the recent decades there have been many key actors beyond the state in the environmental decision-making arena. While there are cases showing that the state may not be the most important governance actor in terms
of delivering good performance, it does not follow, however, that the state’s hazy visibility means it has lesser influence to governance outcomes.

Some critics of the new ways of governing contend that, especially in situations where redistributive policy making becomes necessary (e.g. adaptation), it is unlikely that either the market or hybrid forms of governance will be able to accomplish much (Lowi 2002 in Lemos and Agrawal 2006). Moreover, Gunningham (2009 p.207) points out that “substantial pockets of command and control regulation are still alive and well”, and that while some initiatives in the last few decades evidence an important shift in regulatory architecture and in the roles of the state, they have not resulted in its ‘decentering’. He further argues that even under the ‘new environmental governance’, what is involved is ‘collaboration in the shadow of hierarchy’ with the state underpinning community-based initiatives in a variety of ways, without which they are not likely to succeed. Collaboration among stakeholders “provides local knowledge, ownership and legitimacy while the state provides essential steering functions and resources” (Gunningham 2009, p.207).

Even with the changing political dynamics, the state has immense power in terms of influencing outcomes, desirable or otherwise. However, the above contention undermines what non-state-centric governance can carry out and achieve. Evidence from the field tells us that there are cases when other forms of governance work despite, or even due to, the state’s lessening grip (e.g. in Molnar et al. 2011). While it is true that the state has a crucial role to play in many instances, it is also undeniable that some ‘decentering’ has recently been happening. Moreover, amidst the existence of those ‘pockets of command and control’, and the growing number of failures among current approaches, many other scholars assert the need for, and the value of, having alternatives to top-down government control for governing social-ecological systems (see for example, Olsson et al. 2006; Armitage et al. 2009, and Lebel et al. 2006 on adaptive governance; Connick and Innes 2003 on collaborative governance; Agrawal 2003 on the need for greater attention to micro-politics within communities in governing the commons).

Applied in the environment field, ‘governance’ has been defined as the “exercise of authority over natural resources and the environment” (UNDP et al. 2003), or as “the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and
responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken, and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say in the management of natural resources – including biodiversity conservation” (IUCN RESWCC3.012 in Campese et al. 2009 p.12). Environmental governance “comprises the rules, practices, policies and institutions that shape how humans interact with the environment” (UNEP 2009). Lemos and Agrawal (2006 p.298) refer to it as the “set of regulatory processes, mechanisms and organizations through which political actors influence environmental actions and outcomes”.

Environmental governance deals with the important questions of how we make decisions about the environment, and who participates in these decisions, the answers to which often determine what we decide. These environmental decisions occur in many contexts, from personal choices like how much firewood we will burn, to business decisions that communities or corporations make about how much land to preserve (UNDP et al. 2003). Gemmill and Bamidele-Izu (2002) argue that if environmental governance is defined as the manner in which people exercise authority over nature, it has to be acknowledged that at present, “the health of global environmental commons is trending in a negative direction, while governed by a plethora of treaties with little synergies among them, and little authority to change management practices” (2002). Its current governance arrangements are inadequate and have led to continued degradation of the environment (UNEP 2009).

In addressing the problem, some scholars have conceptualized what constitutes ‘good environmental governance’. Lebel et al (2006), for example, propose that it should be participatory, deliberative, polycentric, multi-layered, accountable, and just, in order for environmental governance to promote capacities to manage resilience. Gale (2008 p.268) on the other hand, defines good environmental governance as “a set of transparent, accountable, open, balanced, deliberative, efficient, science-based and risk-based processes for steering and coordinating the affairs of interdependent social actors in the making of environmental decisions”. In this thesis, good environmental governance is taken to be the structures, processes, and discourses that maintain or enhance the capacity of the social-ecological systems in promoting both human and ecological wellbeing for the benefit of present and future generations.
Some opposing contentions about the capacities of different modes of governance, as discussed earlier, affirm the need to investigate the performance of governance mechanisms that exhibit different forms of governing. As I respond to this through the cases I have chosen for this study, I draw some lessons from both theories and practice and hypothesize that a networked form of governance can, under certain conditions, perform better in both ecological and social terms.

2.2 Forest Governance

The same changing pathways of governing can also be observed when looking closely at forestry. Agrawal and colleagues (2008 pp.1460-1461), for example, observe a general moving away from “centrally administered, top-down regulatory policies that characterized much of the 19th and 20th centuries”. They argue that in the 21st century, three important forest governance trends stand out: 1) decentralization of management, especially for commercially low-value forests that nonetheless play an important role in the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of rural households in developing countries; 2) the substantial role of logging companies in forest concessions, typically for selective logging in tropical forests; and 3) the growing importance of market-oriented certification efforts, mainly in temperate forests in the developed world. While their general observations are tenable, in other developing countries, such as the Philippines, application of decentralized forest management policies is not especially targeted to commercially low-value forests. It has been evident in the last two decades that commercially high-value forests are typically covered under such policies. As the foregoing, as well as some following, discussions demonstrate, however, there is a huge disparity between policy and practice.

The World Bank (2009) defines forest sector governance as the “modus operandi by which people, stakeholder groups, and institutions (both formal and informal) acquire and exercise authority in the management of forest resources, to sustain and improve the quality of life for those whose livelihood depends on the sector”. The Bank argues that poor governance is a major impediment to achieving development outcomes in forestry, resulting in losses of income, employment, government revenues, and local and global environmental services; it has led to “corruption, flagrant disrespect for
rules and regulations, and rampant rent-seeking behaviour by political leaders and forestry officials” (Sayer and Collins 2012 p.140). Good governance is a necessary condition to enable sustainable forest management, and conversely, poor governance makes forest management problematic and contributes to failures of policy and performance that have failed to check high rates of deforestation and forest degradation (MoFor 2008; IFCA 2007). In the context of reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) in particular, appropriate governance is a critical prerequisite (Sikor et al. 2010) without which its highly debated schemes have little opportunity to be successful.

Forest governance discourse has evolved through time. Along this line, authors talk about the development of two opposing tendencies, one focused on segregating areas totally devoted to nature (the national parks movements) and the other aimed at integrating the conservation of nature within production systems. The latter has led to a series of integrated approaches to conservation and development in recent decades (Sayer and Collins 2012; see also Minang et al. 2008; and The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2005). State-centric forest governance has been recognized as neither equitable nor effective, resulting in declined forest cover and many degraded forests throughout the tropics (Sikor et al. 2010). Yet, decentralized forest governance cannot also be taken immediately as ‘the’ solution (see for example Wollenberg et al. 2006 on both its good potential and perils). How can we then improve and practice good forest governance for socio-economic benefits as well as better environmental performance?

There is a growing interest in examining how forest governance arrangements work (Agrawal et al. 2008; Cashore 2009; World Bank 2009). Agrawal and colleagues (2008 p.1462), for example, have identified the following factors as critically important for more effective forest governance in tropical country contexts: careful definition of user rights and responsibilities in forests; greater participation by those who use and depend on forests; downward and horizontal accountability of decision-makers; better monitoring of forest outcomes; stronger enforcement of property rights and governance arrangements; and investments in institutional capacities at local, regional, and national levels. While these factors are important and are elements contributing to a governance mechanism’s accountability and legitimacy, I argue that
they are not sufficient for effective governance. Investments in institutional capacities at various levels, for instance, are laudable but without coordination among the actors, the strategies employed can be counterproductive as cases in the Philippines demonstrate.

Practitioners are faced with the challenge of dealing with forest governance structures and processes that either facilitate or block the addressing of both environmental and development goals. Researchers, on the other hand, also face questions concerning what constitutes good forest governance and how it can be practised. While socio-economic factors driving environmental change (and forest ecosystems degradation), as well as basic constraints on the achievement of sustainability have gained substantial attention in the literature (for example, in Brookfield and Byron 1993; Howard 1993; Wood et al. 2000; Straub 2001; van den Top 2003; Hillstrom and Hillstrom 2003; Chhatre and Saberwal 2006), it is often the questions that relate to ‘what are the drivers’ or ‘who are the culprits’, and ‘why have they done things the way they do’ that are being addressed. Answers to these are important in understanding forest politics at the different geographical scales, and they help in identifying incentives that need to be promoted and disincentives removed, to foster sustainable development and protect biodiversity.

Information addressing how those factors are interconnected and corresponding analyses of the significance of the elements in improving forest governance as a whole complex system is, however, lacking. Treatment of forest governance has more often been piecemeal and fragmented. Yet, it is also important to bear in mind what Sayer and Collins (2012 p.137) have argued, that forest governance needsto be “moving away from a framework based upon the neatly defined boundaries beloved of international organizations and treaties, and submitting to a constant process of adaptation and improvisation at a more local scale”. This is akin to what other researchers have proposed in the context of REDD+ implementation, allowing its governance arrangements “to emerge organically, largely from the bottom-up, within a sufficiently-but not overly-defined international framework” (Kanowski et al. 2011 p.114). Along this line, there seems to be increasing support for ‘nested governance’ conceptualized to employ a systematic consideration of how forest governance operates at different levels across multiple scales, and how conventional state-hosted
policy measures can be integrated in networked governance initiatives (Kanowski et al. 2011; Sikor et al. 2010).

Lessons learned from past practices are indicative of how a particular facet of the forest governance mechanism can be improved; the lessons have not been very clear, however, on how these facets connect and influence the performance of other features of the mechanism for the attainment of an overall desired outcome – one that is responsive to claims from both the threatened forests, as well as the threatened people, instead of sacrificing one claim for the sake of the other.

On The World Bank’s ‘Comprehensive Operational Framework for Forest Governance’

Although recognizing that the forest sector in a country is failing to deliver all its potential benefits is relatively easy, “the lack of an appropriate analytical framework makes it much harder to identify the major shortcomings and to propose a fitting response” (World Bank 2009). There is no doubt that the World Bank is one of the most influential global decision-makers affecting forestry. Concerned that no comprehensive guide had been developed to reform forest governance, it conducted a review of the most prominent efforts to date which have sought to improve forest governance by providing operational measures of it (i.e. ITTO’s 2005 Set for Sustainable Forest Management; IIED’s Pyramid of Key Elements of Good Forest Governance; The MP Working Group on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests; CIFOR’s Toolbox of Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management; The Chatham House Initiative; and the GFI Indicator Framework). The Bank’s aim was to formulate a tool to diagnose forest governance weaknesses to determine appropriate reforms.

Based on the review, the World Bank presents the following findings: a holistic approach to governance is missing; governance aspects need to be aligned to forest sector development objectives; economic aspects of forest governance need greater focus; and actionable governance indicators should be highlighted (World Bank 2009). Consolidating available information from the review, the Bank then came up with the following criteria which it referred to as the ‘building blocks’ of forest governance (and their principal components in parenthesis) (World Bank 2009 p.22):

1. Transparency, Accountability, and Public Participation (Transparency in the forest
sector; Decentralization, devolution, and public participation in forest management; Accountability of forest officials to stakeholders; and Accountability within the forest agencies). 2. Stability of Forest Institutions and Conflict Management (General stability of forest institutions; and Management of conflict over forest resources).

3. Quality of Forest Administration (Willingness to address forest sector issues; Capacity and effectiveness of forest agencies; Corruption control within the forest sector; and Forest monitoring and evaluation (M&E). 4. Coherence of Forest Legislation and Rule of Law (Quality of domestic forest legislation; Quality of forest law enforcement; Quality of forest adjudication; and Property rights recognized/honored/enforced). 5. Economic Efficiency, Equity, and Incentives (Maintenance of ecosystem integrity: sustainable forest use; Incentives for sustainable use and penalties for violations of forest products pricing; Commercial timber trade and forest businesses; Equitable allocation of forest benefits; Market institutions; and Forest revenues and expenditures).

This framework was envisaged to cover all dimensions of forest governance, and as an improvement on existing initiatives for forest governance indicators. I then find it important to have a closer examination of how the World Bank framework shows its applicability to other forest governing actors in various settings. With the aim of having "a tool that can identify reform opportunities and track in-country developments in forest governance over time" (World Bank 2009 p22) it is clear that its framework reflects closer links with the Bank’s usual clientele, i.e. government forestry departments in developing countries. Although the set of criteria carries an explicit recognition of other stakeholders, its emphasis on indicators more relevant to government actors limits its applicability if forest governance is viewed and analyzed using other lenses. One may agree with the proponents’ claim that the "framework provides a better insight into what constitutes ‘ideal’ forest governance" from a government perspective, but then extending this to other actors’ arenas would be contentious. The framework is described as ‘generic’ and is said to be readily applicable to all forest types. Its applicability is however, limited if applied to different forest governance regimes. The World Bank’s framework was also initiated to respond to the fact that forest governance has meant different things to different people – acknowledging this to be “not conducive either to developing a common understanding or to discovering solutions”. The different modes of forest governance
might find different solutions but with some shared elements in addressing a common problem. In the case of protected areas for example, ‘government protected areas’, ‘co-managed protected areas’, ‘private protected areas’, and ‘community conserved areas’ show various governance types (Borrini-Feyerabend 2008).

Even among state protected areas, governance modes may vary, from state-dominated, NGO-led, to a more networked type. Understandably, a pluralism of interests and views is expected from different actors holding management authority and responsibility. Critics have been questioning the viability of universal models of good governance developed by Western donors used in very different historical and cultural contexts. In the Pacific for example, debates continue over the appropriateness of good governance approaches and how traditional values can or should fit with Western forms of democracy. However, many critiques of good governance focus less on the principles and more on the ways in which these principles are translated into practice (JustChange, March-May 2010). While a common understanding of issues may not be at all times necessary for finding solutions, it is nevertheless desirable in order to facilitate a more collective action, and perhaps a more effective solution, especially in relation to issues involving common-pool resources such as forests. Such a shared understanding would, however, be feasible within and across different forest governance regimes only if analyses were based on generally accepted principles and values. Some works in the literature are reflective of this type of analysis. However, one observable weakness is that they have generally mixed the principles of governance with the latter’s desired outcomes, to form criteria for assessing a governance mechanism. While they are indicative of what factors are necessary for having good governance, they can be confusing as they do not provide straightforward bases for investigating a governance mechanism, which should be distinct, but in relation to the values that it envisions achieving as results of good performance.

In another study, Cashore (2009) identifies inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability as overarching principles of ‘good (forest) governance’ as he puts forward the following as its key components: a) overarching principles and criteria; b) institutional fit; c) policy substance (ends); d) policy instruments (means) and e) policy evaluation. While it gives a more comprehensive depiction of the
complexity of a governance system, its conception seems more closely tied to state-centric forest governance setting.

The foregoing discussions, which reflect both a conceptual and a practical shift from government to governance, and from state-centric command and control to a more networked type of governing, are instructive of a governance framework that potentially adapts better to the changing political current in environmental decision-making. A perusal of the literature, however, reveals that a forest governance framework that is more applicable to various governance regimes and approaches and more readily acceptable to different governance actors has been wanting. Adger and colleagues (2003 p. 1107) suggest that “a framework for research which encompasses multiple scales and levels, which can be used to compare and generalise from different contexts, which examines both processes and outcomes, and which explicitly addresses plural environmental values and goals, is a step forward for interdisciplinary research on environmental decision-making”, highlighting that such research could “develop a ‘thick’ understanding of environmental decision-making” to address “critical environmental dilemmas and their interactions”. The following is an attempt to contribute to simplifying such understanding towards a good environmental governance mechanism, guided by some lessons drawn from relevant theoretical propositions.

3. Responding to the Governance Challenge: Good Governance as Structures and Values

Efforts to develop criteria and indicators for forest governance are all aimed at having structures and processes that would work for both forests and people — in other words, to achieve good forest governance. In the initiatives reviewed in the previous section, a common theme reflected in their objectives has been ‘sustainable forest management’ for both ecological and human wellbeing. Even if forest governance is analyzed from different perspectives such as in the context of the REDD scheme, or as a tool for poverty reduction for instance, the goal has always been two-pronged, that is, environmental as well as developmental. Given this, good forest governance is directly linked to its effect on both ecological and social systems. While ‘governance’ per se is a neutral concept, ‘good forest governance’ is value-laden. Thus, the latter
cannot be dissociated from its outcomes. Looking back on those cited sets of criteria for good forest governance, however, there seems to be a ‘disconnect’. This can perhaps be attributed to the imbalance in the emphasis between structures-processes and desired outcomes.

Good forest governance refers to both the structures and the values to be achieved. Existing frameworks and discussions on the subject have, however, been undermining the latter. When decentralization is used as an indicator of the ‘accountability’ criterion of good governance for example, one can immediately see that a governance regime that employs structures that are enabling more decentralized processes and approaches is good or is performing better than other models. While this can be true in many settings, what if countries with a traditionally authoritarian political culture call for a different approach? Would it be reasonable to generalize then about decentralization as an indicator of a good governance feature? It is true that a strategy that has been used in many parts of the globe to promote the task of shifting the natural resource decision making responsibility nearer to the resource and its users has been ‘decentralization’. Despite decentralized systems that provide avenues for public participation, failed natural resource management efforts however remain a ‘too-common story’ (Eversole 2003 p.781). A question may also arise if particular indigenous traditions and practices do not conform to a decentralized system, but perform well in achieving environmental protection. A lesson here is to be prescriptive in the use of general principles as criteria, but more liberal with its indicators so as not to be imposing given the differences in geographical setting, context and scale in governance systems.

Also, giving much attention to structures and processes without linking them directly to outcomes when assessing whether or not a governance mechanism is good, can be misleading. One might tend to claim good forest governance practice by simply enumerating compliance with its structures and processes in relation to the good governance criteria and indicators discussed above, neglecting the fact that what defines governance as good is the degree to which it maximizes or promotes the desired values vis-à-vis ecological and human wellbeing. Sen (2009 p.18) argues that “the importance of human lives, experiences and realizations cannot be supplanted by information about institutions that exist and the rules that operate”. Therefore, both
the chosen structures and the consequential values obtained need to be treated as prerequisites in assessing forest governance for a more effective, rather than a self-defeating, intervention.

Forest governance actors within and beyond the state

The need for a framework for good forest governance can also be attributed to the changing face of the governing actors as highlighted in earlier sections. Globalization and decentralization have both contributed to the shifting of the locus of authority in managing forest resources at various scales. One such shift is shown in the dynamics involving state and non-state actors, displaying a lessening authority of the government and the increasing role of both civil society and the market in environmental decision-making, with some evidence showing the emergence of a more networked type of governance (Rosenau and Czempied 1992; Pattberg 2007; Biermann et al. 2010). McCarthy and Tacconi (2011 pp125-128) contend that “the decision-making power over the future of forests is being taken out of the hands of governments”, suggesting that governance reforms may no longer be that relevant and that policies should rather focus on influencing decisions made by more significant players driving deforestation such as heads of farms and agri-businesses. The authors acknowledge that global economic trade and local economic incentives continue to create powerful inducements that help to explain high rates of deforestation. But then, is it really governance reforms, or is it the traditional notion of governance tied with the state that has been shown to be less relevant?

Although aware of the ineffectiveness of governments in carrying out their tasks, and presenting a report that shows a much better performance by indigenous people and forest communities than governments at conservation, Molnar and colleagues (2011) on the other hand point out that the government still has important roles to play. They argue that “the future of forests pivots on whether governments will bring rights and democratic practice to forests” (Molnar et al. 2011). They propose several steps that both governments and donors can take to transform the sector for people and forests. These include 1) securing the tenure and rights of forest communities over their forest lands and resources, respecting gender, indigenous peoples’ rights, and other vulnerable minorities; 2) levelling the playing field by reforming policies and
regulatory frameworks to support social enterprises at their own scale of operation while divesting state-run enterprises; and 3) providing technical and financial support, building on existing local organizations and respecting the multiple roles of Community and Smallholder Forest Management and Enterprises in resource conservation, the provision of social benefits, and building local economies. This discussion once more indicates that given the mandate of the state, it can still play a crucial role as an instrument in shaping outcomes. A case of a state-dominated governance mechanism which is investigated in this research provides important evidence that shows both the constraining and the enabling factors affecting a state’s performance.

Stakeholders from local to global levels, indigenous peoples’ organizations to big private business corporations, from forest dwellers to international funders have indeed exhibited their influence in the forest governance arena. While we acknowledge the increasing significance of decision-makers other than the state, the direct or indirect effects (good or bad) of the official actions or inactions of the latter on forests and people cannot, however, be underestimated. While a better understanding of the dynamics of the widening role of non-state actors is called for, eliminating the role of the state from the analysis of and intervention in forest governance as one of the ‘steering actors’ would likely be more damaging than helpful.

4. Governance for Forests and People

For the purposes of this thesis I define good forest governance as the employment of institutional arrangements, processes, and discourses for the enhancement or maintenance of the ecological and social systems’ capacity in promoting and sustaining the wellbeing of forests and people for the benefit of present and future generations. For the analysis of forest governance mechanism, I use the framework illustrated in Figure 2. In examining how the attributes of governance arrangements and processes influence the capacity of the social-ecological systems in addressing conservation and development goals, the following will serve as the criteria: 1) Legitimacy, 2) Accountability, 3) Efficiency in decision-making, 4) Coordination, and 5) Resilience. These criteria are described in section 1. These combined features
of good forest governance aim to maximize the following core values: a) *Distributive justice*, b) *Livelihood protection*, c) *Ecosystem protection*, and d) *Sustainability*. These are described in section 4.2. Good environmental governance promotes both ecological and human wellbeing.

It is highly important that attention be given to both institutions and outcomes indicators in examining performance of a governance mechanism. As Young (2002 p.14) aptly puts it, "[w]hereas the question of causality centers on establishing the significance of institutions as driving forces, the question of performance requires specification of criteria of evaluation, followed by assessment of the extent to which actual outcomes measure up in terms of those criteria. Under the circumstances, it is easy to see that an institution may be accepted as a powerful causal force but be regarded as a failure or an underachiever”.

**Figure 2. Forest Governance Framework for Ecological and Human Wellbeing**

- **Forest Governance Structures & Processes**
  - **Governance Criteria**: Legitimacy, Accountability, Cost-efficiency, Coordination, Resilience
  - **Core Values**: Distributive justice, Ecosystem protection, Livelihood protection, Sustainability

**4.1. Governance Criteria**

1. *Legitimacy*. Those who are governed accept the intervention as appropriate in terms of its processes, as well as its perceived potential outcome.
Legitimacy is described by Lipset (1959) as involving “the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society”. Poggi considers legitimacy as the “moral grounds for obedience to power, as opposed to grounds of self-interest or coercion” (1978 in Parkinson 2003 p.182). Legitimacy is also defined as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions” (Suchmann 1995 in Cashore 2002 p.515).

In Adger et al. (2003 p.1099), legitimacy accordingly relates to “procedural justice and the extent to which decisions are acceptable to participants on the basis of who makes and implements the decisions”. Expanding and deepening such conceptualization, it is argued that “procedures and outcomes are legitimate to the extent that those subject to the decision have the right, opportunity and capacity to participate in deliberation about it” (Hendriks et al. 2007 p.371; see also Dryzek 2001). Within this conceptualization of legitimacy in the theory of deliberative democracy, Dryzek (2009) posits that “the requirement applies to all participants, be they representatives, citizens, or activists” and that “legitimation is secured in their interaction”.

Input (or procedural) legitimacy and output legitimacy are considered two dimensions of legitimacy: input legitimacy, which stems from procedural logic, asks whether policies and norms are developed in a transparent, fair, inclusive and accountable manner. On the other hand, output legitimacy, which is associated with a consequential logic, collective problem-solving and effectiveness, asks whether norms and institutions lead to collective problem-solving and performance (Scharpf 1999 and 2006 inKronsell and Backstrand 2010 p.39). Although both dimensions will be included, this thesis places more emphasis on input legitimacy as a criterion, highlighting some of its central elements such as representation, inclusiveness, and participation; the output legitimacy of the mechanisms under study will largely depend on the extent to which the governance objectives are met as elucidated under the section below on ‘Core Values’.
When it is applied in environmental governance, stakeholders will regard governance mechanism as legitimate according to the way in which its practices fit in with their expectations. Legitimacy of outcomes, on the other hand, would largely depend on the extent to which the processes employed in the mechanism are regarded as legitimate, as well as on the manner and quality in which recognized issues are addressed or responded. To gain or increase legitimacy, governance actors in the natural resource management field have tried to apply more participatory approaches. Policy makers and practitioners claim that their initiatives are collaborative, encouraging a process that allows for pluralism of inputs from among differing and often competing stakeholders through provision of access to environmental information, and of opportunities to participate in decision-making.

2. **Accountability.** To be accountable is to be held responsible; accountability includes the extent to which there is clarity about the roles of various institutions in decision-making; there is systematic monitoring of sector operations and processes; and the basis for basic decisions is clear or justified.

Accountability has increasingly become a buzzword in both development and academic communities. Goetz and Jenkins (2001) acknowledge the wide agreement that “contemporary democracies, North and South, face a crisis of accountability”. Accountability refers to the way in which public and private sector decision makers are held responsible for their actions. ‘Answerability’ or providing an account, and ‘enforceability’ which denotes punishing poor or illegal performance, are said to be the key elements of accountability (Schedler 1999 in Goetz and Jenkins 2001).

Dryzek (2009 p.5) on the other hand contends that “democratic legitimacy requires that empowered space be held accountable to public space”. By ‘empowered space’, he means the arena “where authoritative collective decisions get produced”, and he describes ‘public space’, as having a “diversity of viewpoints and discourses that can interact ideally without legal restriction” (2009 p.5).

Accountability carries with it a tacit recognition of a relationship that exists between a party holding a right or a legitimate claim, and another party whose responsibility to uphold such right or claim is expected. In the past, dominant discussions on the topic often reflected such a relationship between the voting populace and government...
officials. There is now a growing recognition however, that accountability (like governance as a whole) is a multi-stakeholder responsibility and process. With the influence of actors beyond the state gaining more prominence, accompanied by the corresponding changes in the loci of authority, the question of where accountability rests in terms of rights and responsibilities has become more relevant.

The issue of accountability is especially challenging in the context of environmental governance which seems to be characterized by a fluidity of different actors from several levels exercising power in various scales. As Biermann (2007 p.333) has put it, “In the 20th century, legitimacy and accountability was a problem of national governments. In the 21st century and its new needs of earth system governance, accountability and legitimacy appear in a different context”.

The engagement of the non-state actors with the government has also required a more complex accountability mechanism. Consider for instance, a mining operation of a multinational corporation from an industrialized country in a developing country; or a forest conservation effort in an ancestral domain in the South funded by a government from the North, channelled through a national agency of the host government, but implemented by an international NGO in partnership with a local government and a research institution. The reality of having multiple actors exercising decision-making power at different levels makes the tracing of authoritative decisions driving the actions that are happening on the ground, harder to pin down. This definitely has effects on the authorities’ sense of accountability and the other players’ loyalty. Unless there is a mechanism that clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities, as well as sanctions and incentives, project implementers and other decision-makers could easily ‘wash their hands’ of the responsibility which could affect performance.

3. Cost-efficiency. I use the notion of cost-efficiency which focuses on costs in terms of time, money, effort, and other resources spent in decision-making; I do not use the welfare economist’s notion of efficiency in utilitarian social welfare terms as this aggregates too many questions of livelihood and wellbeing into one measure.

With particular reference to time, Gale (2008) for example states that decision-making takes time and, all things being equal, the shorter the time the more efficient
the decision-making process. However, he considers the following factors to mitigate against environmental decisions being taken quickly: a) the number of parties involved; b) the amount of information to be assessed; and c) the seriousness of the risk of getting it wrong.

Lemos and Agrawal (2206) point out a pitfall when efficiency is the sole consideration. State authorities who may be under fiscal pressures may find partnerships with market actors highly desirable for more efficient implementation, in the same manner that civil society actors and communities historically strapped for funding may also perceive collaboration with private actors attractive. However, concerns have been raised about “the degree to which increasing recourse to market actors and processes undermines social goals related to higher levels of democratic participation, creates problems of unequal access to resources, and raises the specter of lack of accountability”. They argue that “an exclusive focus on greater efficiency, especially where natural resources are concerned, may yield the unanticipated outcome of increasing commodification of nature” (Lemos and Agrawal 2006 p.319).

These dangers can be addressed by emphasising the legitimacy of the mechanism along with the efficiency consideration. In this respect, communicative coordination has an important role to play. It safeguards the collaboration from being too focused on efficient performance; rather, its discursive nature better ensures accountability which is mutually reinforcing with the legitimacy and efficiency criteria in advancing distributive justice and sustainability.

4. **Coordination.** This refers to the extent to which various agencies and actors, whose decisions impact upon forests, are adopting coordinated strategies to obtain higher joint benefits or reduce their joint harm.

Dryzek (1987) classifies coordination into two kinds: 1) coordination ‘among actors but within particular collective actions’; and 2) coordination ‘across different collective actions’. The ‘collective’ quality of many ecological problems and the ‘non-reducibility in the ecological circumstances of social choice’ accordingly necessitates coordination within choices and coordination across different social choices, respectively. He illustrates how individual rational choices can lead to collectively bad outcomes, and how coordination within choices provides some
resolution to the dilemma. On coordination ‘across’, he proposes that “the parts of a social choice mechanism must be able to act in concert, such that choices at any point in the mechanism are rationally adapted to choices at other points” (Dryzek 1987 pp.48-51).

In a discussion about conflicts between experts and lay people, Margolis (1996 p.215) recommends ‘social cooperation’. According to him, individual choices often reflect considerations only on things of direct concern to and familiar to the individual, suggesting that “social choices that make good sense need to be made socially and cannot be left to emerge from uncoordinated individual choice” (1996 p.215). This underscores the importance of coordination among actors within particular collective actions. In the context of forest governance, this can mean, for example, the advantage of employing a mechanism that accommodates a number of different inputs in decision-making; when this is absent it can undermine equity, or perhaps exacerbates the issue of leakage, rendering the individual actions counter-productive.

A possible pitfall when there is an absence of coordination across different collective actions is evident in the payment for environmental services (PES) scheme (Pagliola et al. 2005; Wunder 2005; Peskett and Harkin 2007) from which the reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) mechanism draws its concept. REDD is based on the idea that financial incentives are offered to developing countries to put in place new policies and measures to reduce emissions from deforestation or forest degradation (Peskett et al. 2008). Such a mechanism is, however, vulnerable to leakage which happens, for example, when a country receiving a payment for forest conservation simply shifts its logging activities to another forested area that is not under contract. Critics of the payment scheme argue that “many PES programs do not achieve additionality”. The solution they say, depends in “better targeting of service providers and better monitoring” (Jindal and Kerr 2007 p.5).

In the context of REDD, this can mean among other things, coordinating the country’s planning and implementation efforts that encompass the forestry and agricultural sectors for a better integration of initiatives, as well as for more comprehensive information as the basis for analyses of actions and outcomes. As the
findings of a report of the International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO) suggest, “disregarding the impact of forests on sectors such as agriculture and energy will doom any new international efforts whose goal is to conserve forests and slow climate change” (Rayner quoted in Vidal 2011). Coordination can also build shared understanding. Relevant questions, for example, that might be addressed in the process would be: “Where do plantations fit in vis-à-vis the forest-carbon sequestration link? What is the implication of the generally recognized definition of ‘forests’ for achieving the perceived REDD gains? Thus, communication (definitions and interpretations) plays a crucial role as a coordination tool in establishing the integrity of a governance mechanism.

5. **Resilience.** The ability of the mechanism to steer human and ecological systems back to normal operating range in the face of severe ecological problems (Dryzek 1987).

The occurrence of natural disasters in many parts of the globe and the growing discussions about the effects of climate change and on ways to address the problem have increased people’s interests on ‘resilience’, a term that broadly suggests a desirable attribute for both ecological and social systems. In Swift et al. (2004 pp.120-121), resilience is referred to as “the capacity of a system to respond to and recover from disturbance”. These authors recognize the importance of diversity within functional groups in “providing means for increasing the probability that ecosystem performance can be maintained or regained in the face of changing conditions”. They also present a view that sees resilience as “a property which varies among functions rather than a unitary ecosystem property” (2004 pp.120-121). This definition of resilience is more associated with ecosystem resilience, and while related, it displays some difference in purpose and approach compared to the type of resilience attributed to a social system (or a ‘social choice’ mechanism).

For the purposes of the discussions on the features of an environmental (forest) governance mechanism, we will use Dryzek’s definition of resilience, that is, “the ability of the mechanism to steer human and ecological systems back to normal operating range in the face of severe ecological problems”. This requires the governance mechanism’s ability to ‘move other systems’ (both human and ecological), compared to the “capacity of a system to move itself back to the
equilibrium range”, a characteristic attributed to resilience stability in ecosystems (see Dryzek 1987 pp.52-54).

Given the role of resilience that deals with severe disturbance or crisis, a governance mechanism calls for a varying degree and characteristics of resilience in fulfilling its function, depending on the extent and nature of the ecological problem. If, for example, the problem is famine, we can hypothesize that the mechanism has to have robustness in the governing actors’ capacity to explore, coordinate, and produce food from diversified sources. If the problem on the other hand has something to do with forest fire, flooding or a cyclone, flexibility in following established rules, and efficiency in decision-making and coordination would probably be among the top considerations. Whatever the nature of the problem, diversity in the system seems to be a significant element enhancing resilience.

The five criteria used in this thesis in examining forest governance mechanisms perform interdependently in shaping outcomes. While legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, and coordination are necessary conditions in good forest governance, I consider ‘resilience’ as contingent, that is, required only when “one commences from a situation of fundamental disequilibrium” (Dryzek 1987, p.54). As necessary conditions, a combination of the first four features is essential in all forest governance mechanisms if the aim is to have structures and processes that will facilitate the maintenance or enhancement of the capacity of the social-ecological systems in promoting both human and ecological wellbeing. These must, in addition, be anchored in the following values in order to benefit both forests and people.

4.2. Core Values

1. Distributive Justice. For the purposes of this thesis, I define distributive justice as the fair distribution of benefits and burdens to the least advantaged peoples in the course of protected area management and conservation.

Consistent with Rawls's political conception of justice as fairness, one of the two principles serving as guidelines of how basic institutions can realize the values of liberty and equality emphasizes that “they must be to the greatest benefit of the least
advantaged members of society” (Rawls 1985 p.227). While recognizing the important role of institutions in enabling justice, as reflected in Rawls's theory, I also agree with Sen’s suggestion of the need to look into the lives that affected people actually live. In Sen’s idea of justice, he acknowledges the importance of institutions and rules in influencing what happens, arguing that they are part and parcel of the actual world as well, but that the realized actuality goes well beyond the organizational picture, and includes the lives that people manage – or do not manage – to live.

2. *Ecosystem Protection.* Conservation of forests for the purpose of sustaining or enhancing the generation of ecosystem services and products.

Forests are under pressure, from “conversion to natural and other uses, from illegal and unsustainable harvesting of forest products, and from climate change” (McDermott 2010). While there are situations showing local people conserving the forests and other resources in their natural state, Tacconi (2007) argues that ‘conservation should not be presumed’ as a practice among people living in and near forests. He says that a very important consideration is the actual contribution of forests to peoples’ livelihoods, since “if the benefits from the forest are higher than those from other land uses, people might conserve it for utilitarian reasons, no matter whether they control it in common or through private rights” (Tacconi 2007 p.342). Moran (2005) on the other hand also argues that there is no given tenure regime that is superior in ensuring forest wellbeing. He contends that property owners under any tenure regime can design successful institutions, with evidence showing that “rules-in-use associated with resource management shape forest conditions whether in private, communal, or government-owned tenure regimes” (Moran 2005 p.18).

Effective governance is central to improved forest cover (Agrawal et al. 2008) and other components of the ecosystem. It is however important to be reminded of the multiple objectives of forest governance which includes taking into account, for instance, the fact that “what upland farmers really need is secure access to land for food crop cultivation rather than trees” (Lebel et al. 2004 p.122) since what local people are usually more concerned about are features of environment that provide immediate benefits such as water, soil, and non-timber products (Endamana et al.
In managing an ecological-social system, there is often a question of which should prevail, the protection of essential ecological processes and life support systems in forest areas, or people's access to their means of income? Prioritizing one over the other would in the long run be self-defeating, while protecting each as a goal will be mutually reinforcing.

3. **Livelihood Protection.** Protection of the local communities’ access to the benefits derived from the use of forests and forestlands through conversion of forests to other uses, direct use of forest products, and indirect environmental services (Tacconi 2007), which support subsistence consumption, cash income, agricultural inputs, input to industries, or input to capital formation.

With 92 percent of the world’s 1.2 billion people living in extreme poverty relying on forest resources for their living, protecting livelihoods has become a core objective in many forest resource management initiatives. In the context of the REDD scheme, arguments have been put forward emphasizing forestry as a ‘multiple affair’, that trees are not just sticks of carbon, as ‘working’ forests, protected areas and on-farm tree resources interact across landscapes to deliver environmental, social and economic benefits (Mayers et al. 2008). A common theme of ‘forests and livelihoods’ is observable among many current natural resource management projects, funded by multilateral and bilateral agencies (van den Top 2003). Even international NGOs that used to focus on addressing conservation goals have now incorporated a livelihood component in their efforts aimed to contribute environmental sustainability and food security. Hundreds of million dollars have been poured into developing countries for this reason, and the Philippines has been among the recipients, as demonstrated in my case studies. With livelihoods as a key component in forest governance mechanisms, it is then imperative to include in the examination whether or not the local communities’ livelihoods are enhanced, or at least protected.

4. **Sustainability.** The use and management of the resource for maximum long-term benefit.

Sustainability as a concept started in the 1970s, and is defined by “imaginative attempts to dissolve the conflict between environmental and economic values that
energize the discourses of problem solving and limit". A consensus on its exact meaning has still not been elucidated (Dryzek 2005 p.16). For the purposes of this thesis, 'sustainability' will refer to the use and management of the resource for maximum long-term benefit.

Sustainable use and management of resources as a goal proves to be a difficult undertaking in both theory and practice. In the context of forests which are common-pool resources, this can be even more challenging. McKean explains that where forest-dependent people still live nearby, "the transfer of their traditional rights into other hands does not simultaneously transfer the physical opportunity to use these resources". Instead, with their secure property rights now gone, any incentive they might have had in the past to manage these resources for the long term is also lost. Incentives for monitoring and restrained use are said to be eliminated, converting owner protectors into poachers, and so worsening the resource depletion it was supposedly intended to prevent (McKean 2000 p.35). Uncertainty is typically involved in initiatives to define and establish sustainable levels of extraction for these resources, as some of the critical information needed for decision-making is not available. In dealing with uncertainties that may include 'environmental fluxes and social change', Tucker and Ostrom (2005) suggest the need for flexibility and adaptive capacity that institutional design implies.

It would be noteworthy here to recall the notion of 'sustainable development' – defined by The 1987 Brundtland World Commission on Environment and Development Report Our Common Future as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". According to Markandya et al. (2002), the first attempts to make the concept more precise were theoretical rather than practical, focusing on the economic and the environmental dimensions of the debate. From the economic perspective, the authors suggest that sustainable development implies that no generation in the future should be worse off than the present generation. With regards to the environmental dimension, they argue that there is often a trade-off between using natural ecosystems to provide inputs to production even if this use is sustainable, and preserving them in their natural condition to maintain life-support services. The value that could be obtained from harvesting ecosystems and from converting the land to an
alternative use for instance, is the opportunity cost of preservation. One argument for why social dimensions are included in sustainable development concerns the observation that economic and environmental factors alone fail to explain substantial differences in economic outcomes in countries with similar endowments of human, natural and man-made capital (2002 pp.16-24).

Are economic growth and environmental conservation contradictory goals? The debate revolves around the question of which is of prime importance – the environment or human needs? In Dryzek’s analysis of sustainable development, he points out that although the sustainable development discourse recognizes that the legitimate development aspirations of the world’s peoples cannot be addressed by all countries following the growth path already taken by the industrialized countries, economic growth is also necessary to satisfy the legitimate needs of the world’s poor. The alleviation of poverty will ameliorate what is one of the basic causes of environmental degradation. Dryzek (1997 p. 129) suggests that economic growth should therefore be promoted but guided in ways that are both “environmentally benign and socially just”.

5. Concluding Remarks

From the foregoing discussions, we see movement away from forms of forest governance that are closely associated with the state’s ‘command and control’ model. Emerging collaborations among state and non-state actors have somehow reduced the relevance of the conventional state-market-community categories and facilitated hybrid governance with a combination of actors and/or approaches. This development has a bearing on how we analyze and compare governance mechanisms, suggesting that the framing of these mechanisms is better served if it factors in the nuances of how they actually operate. It is also important to choose governance criteria that are widely applicable across a range of modes of governance. While the broad literature is indicative of this aspect, it is not clear how the suggested governance features, when put together, relate to each other and influence the performance of the overall mechanism relative to the desired outcomes.
The framework that I employ is anchored in the premise that good forest governance refers to both the structures and the values to be achieved. I reiterate that while ‘governance’ per se is a neutral concept, ‘good forest governance’ is value-laden. Thus, the latter cannot be dissociated from its outcomes. I consider legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, and coordination as necessary conditions of good forest governance, while ‘resilience’ is contingent on the existence of an ecological crisis. These features perform interdependently in shaping outcomes relevant to the core values to be promoted in the ecological and social systems involved.

I now turn to the framework’s application. The approaches and techniques that I use in gathering, as well as in analyzing the empirical data capturing both governance structures and values are the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

Investigations in relation to answering the central question of my thesis were conducted against a backdrop of a changing character of political decision-making in the environmental field and in the broader setting. In this chapter, I present the methodology I employed in capturing the evolving societal processes and dynamics that interact with the protected area governance mechanisms that I studied.

Some authors refer to a ‘symbiosis between methodology and political organization’. Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) for instance have indicated that a positivist methodology and a hierarchically ordered, Madisonian form of democracy presume and sustain each other. They posited that mainstream policy analysis “rests on philosophical realism” and “assumes that the data and observations that form the input of its analytical techniques are non-problematic...” (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003 pp.1-30). On the other hand they argue that a critical policy study, with its assumptions about the inherently contextual nature of knowledge seems more consistent with the contemporary situation, asserting that a policy analysis that is interpretative, pragmatic, and deliberative is both practically and philosophically attuned to the continuous give and take in networks of actors. After all, “one cannot conduct defensible policy analysis without attending also to the political process with which analysis and policy are involved” (Dryzek 1993 p.229).

This research is largely empirical but is infused with theoretical perspectives given that the “hermeneutic reconstruction of social problems cannot be achieved through purely empirical research operations in any case”; my normative judgements as researcher are unavoidable (see Scharpf 1978 p.349). My project traces, and analyses features of governance mechanisms involving state and non-state actors in authoritative decision-making processes and their relationships with governance outcomes. It also endeavours to respond to a call to pay more attention to studying concrete manifestations of experiments with governance, their politics and policy
making and to conceptualize the new settings in which they occur as well as the way in which this changes the nature of the political game “rather than suggesting that these should be about the impact of the network society...” without showing the mechanisms at work (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003 pp.4-5). This was posed as the central problem of my thesis: What forest governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing? The following sections present my research orientation and methodology that facilitate answering this question and which I hope contribute to the body of knowledge on environmental governance in developing countries.

2. Institutional and Interpretative

In trying to investigate and understand forest governance, my thesis is both institutional and interpretative in its approach, employing a mix of methods. While at some point I was descriptive-historical, my institutional approach is predominantly interpretative; this approach is also reflected in my comparative case study method which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Institutional. Understanding the changing character of political institutions calls for an adaptive way of examining them; it necessitates one that includes looking into their ambiguity in form and functioning. Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) claim that along with the rise of the vocabulary of governance has been a shift in language, from institutions to networks, suggesting that institutional language implies stability, while the latter implies fluidity. But how are networks better understood? Can one appreciate them without studying the institutions in which they reside? Scharpf (1997 p.39) observes that collective actors may be said to “exist” only to the extent that the individuals acting within and for them are able to coordinate their choices within a common frame of reference that is constituted by institutional rules. He therefore proposes an actor-centered institutionalism in the face of complexity. Rhodes (1997 p.83) on the other hand avers that “there is a future for the institutional approach, but not as it existed in its classic form”. I find it more feasible to systematically study collective actions and their mechanisms in the context of governance networks by examining institutions viewed as complex units of analyses imbued with practices and discourses.
A perspective that was particularly helpful in capturing better the essence of the state and non-state institutions that I studied in my cases was Dryzek’s distinction between institutional hardware and institutional software; in his ‘Informal Logic of Institutional Design’, he emphasized the importance of examining the way institutional interventions may “reinforce, reshape, or undermine particular discourses” (1996 p.103); it also recognizes the discourse’s influence in forming institutions, which then has an implication on the institutional design process. Referred to as “a framework of apprehending the world embedded in language, enabling its adherents to put together diverse bit of sensory information into coherent wholes”, discourse is recognized as central in understanding institutions with which it is ‘intertwined’. Dryzek argues that no institution can operate without an associated and supportive discourse (or discourses) which he calls the ‘institutional software’. On the other hand, rules, rights, operating procedures, customs and principles are manifestations of the ‘institutional hardware’ (Dryzek 1996 pp.103-104). Dryzek’s theory is consistent with Schmidt’s emphasis on institutions with a discursive turn in what she terms ‘discursive institutionalism’ – a methodological approach that facilitates a way of explaining the dynamics of institutional change through ideas and discourses (Schmidt 2008; Schmidt 2009).

Conceptualizing ‘institution’ this way deviates from a state-centric approach; it gives some leeway that accommodates more institutions representing other influential or relevant players in a political arena. Moreover, the distinction provides a relatively novel and a more inclusive and deeper way of analyzing institutions. It sheds light on the often overlooked subtle relationship between structures and values expressed through discourses which often have profound effects in terms of how each can buttress or weaken the other; it avoids the simplistic way entailed in the conventional institutional approach and presents the idea of discourse as a dimension of an institution which can be viewed as a potent force influencing collective actions. Highlighting the distinction is also important in the way in which it can enhance appreciation of research methodologies that are more in tune with some more complex realities. Through investigating institutions and being mindful of their institutional hardware and software, the institutional approach that I employed was then predominantly interpretative without disregarding the useful descriptive-historical means.
Interpretative. In analysing governance, my research follows an interpretative approach whose trademark is a ‘focus on meaning that is situated in a particular context’; its foundation is in the ‘life world of the actors’ relevant to the governance mechanism; ‘local knowledge’ and ‘practical judgement’ are central to its endeavour. Furthermore, it is also ‘cultural’ in its approach which if applied in public policies and their implementation, enables a treatment of them as ‘expressions not only of individual meaning but of collective, societal meaning – emphasizing the situatedness of policy substance and process within their societal context’ (Yanow 2003 pp.228-232). As Murray Edelman has aptly noted: “Inquiry into the evocation of meanings entails seeing observers and the observed as part of the same transaction rather than as subject and object, and it also recognizes that values, theories, and facts are integrally intertwined with each other rather than distinct concepts” (1964 in Yanow 2003 pp.228-229).

The interpretative approach is a tradition which is argued to have “much wider relevance for understanding contemporary politics than is often appreciated” as it can help us “come to grips with the political phenomena of our time” (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003 pp. 6-7). The literature acknowledges the importance of problem formulation and practical judgement in understanding policy problems and finding policy solutions (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003) which then calls for more attention to be given to the institutional software or the discursive dimension in studying public policy and its implementation. Here, an interpretative analysis is deemed appropriate as one sees the value of having a solution that is more context-tailored. I view this type of analysis as more sensitive to contextual realities especially considering that “meaning and context are only loosely coupled” (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003 p.17). Such an approach is then better equipped to capture the complexity of forest conservation policy-making and implementation which can easily be concealed by “images of policy and administration that focus on linear lines of authoritative command and give paramount status to the sovereign state” (Torgerson 2003 p.114). Having a contextual orientation, it is more capable of paying attention on the patterns of social interactions within and between the authoritative and the public spaces.

Applied to my research project, I did not stop for example in knowing that illegal logging is rampant and therefore the rule of law did not work. Instead, putting “human meaning and social realities to the core” (Yanow 2003 p.236), I proceeded
further to inquire into the relevant actors’ narratives and discourses attached to the phenomenon. My interpretative analysis of these narratives and discourses helped me establish the patterns of interactions that point to the most significant factors that had led to and/or reinforced ecologically damaging practices. This inquiry facilitated my understanding of both the formal and informal governance institutions beyond their material make-up, through discovering the discursive elements that either erode or support them.

3. Practice-Oriented

I distanced myself from the neutral language of traditional, modernist policy analysis, where “the pragmatic, value-laden, effective world of the practitioner makes little sense” (see Wagenaar and Cook 2003 p.170-171). Rather, I positioned close to the points of action by engaging local actors’ intimate knowledge of the complexities of the situation as well as eliciting inputs from other political, civic, and corporate actors while formulating what I view as an improved version of the existing bridge that can transmit local collective actions to more authoritative political units.

As a practice-oriented research, my effort was not geared towards designing a set of quick fix solutions to the specific problems under investigation. Instead, it was more intended to draw lessons and insights from the affected players immersed in the realities where the issues are closely connected. I wanted to establish patterns and key messages that can be used in informing and improving relevant theories, as well as in developing propositions aimed to challenge a broader socio-political structure where the governing actors operate which proves to obstruct the latter’s collective actions, and to enhance or sustain one that is enabling. Moreover, part of my objective was to come up with recommendations that will be drawn from the research findings relevant to institutional factors that may improve the fit between what exists and what is needed, that would guide actors in influencing governance network and in formulating policy options.

These underlying motivations have also shaped the choices I made in analytically pursuing this project, combining deductive and inductive reasoning in the process. It is hard to speculate a value-free political science given the analyst’s intellectual
baggage that she or he carries during the whole research enterprise (see Rhodes 1997). Before embarking on generating patterns and forming theories (grounded) after “drawing inferences from repeated observations” on the empirical data I have gathered (Rhodes 1997 p.65; Woods 1999), I engaged with theorists as well as with relevant concepts and propositions in the literature, and merged what I have learned from them with my experiential knowledge in this field as I formulated the analytical framework that I employed (Chapter 2).

Devising a framework for what constitute the defining features of good forest governance as shown in the previous chapter was an important part of the research process. I needed that point of reference prior to moving on to the empirical investigation, to avoid a “haphazard search for possibly interesting questions within a universe of potentially relevant data” (Scharpf 1978 p.350). As the investigator becomes immersed in the field situation, it is normal to find so many interesting things to study that she/he can be at a loss as to how to delimit the scope of the project (Whyte 1984). The framework I adopted was useful in facilitating a better focus, one that balanced depth and breadth in my explorations. However, as I will explain later in this chapter, it was important that the guide questions I formulated for each of the criteria were ‘open-ended’ to better accommodate pieces of information that are sometimes overlooked but are equally or even more important than the predetermined ones. Given the central question of my study, the framework also served as my guide in identifying performance deficits, as well as providing the basis for systematically analyzing the governance mechanisms’ structural, procedural, and other intervening conditions that can help explain practices and outcomes.

My appreciation of the framework’s governance criteria (that is, legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination, and resilience) as well as the core values that need to be maximized (that is, distributive justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability) were strongly influenced by what I have actually experienced or witnessed in more than 10 years of involvement as a non-state actor engaging with state actors in implementing and managing multilateral and bilateral environment and development projects in coastal and upland areas within Southeast Asian countries. Although I was confident with the framework, I went to the field with an openness and flexibility toward some changes; the pieces of
information that I obtained from my respondents, however, underpins the validation of this framework.

A practice-oriented approach underscores the notion of interdependence in governance networks which is suggestive of a modus operandi that is compatible with accessing actors' contextual local knowledge and with capturing the complexity of interactions. The following section discusses the comparative case studies and how the methodological framework I adopted accommodated the character of my research project.

4. The Comparative Case Studies Method

The comparative case study method I employed in investigating forest governance is qualitatively oriented. Qualitative research is said to offer both flexibility and robustness and is often characterized by the following: a focus on a natural setting; an interest in meanings, perspectives, and understandings; an emphasis on process; and inductive analysis and grounded theory (Woods 1999). However, as I have indicated, I employed both inductive and deductive analyses in my study. Qualitative research can be multi-method (Denzin and Lincoln 1994).

Case study approach allows one to investigate the phenomena that span a considerable period of time, yet it permits examination and interpretation of complex interactions, discrete events, tacit processes, and some hidden beliefs and values within this temporal space demonstrating the study’s potential to improve practices (see Yin 2002; Marshall and Rossman 2006). Case studies do not represent a sample; their goal is more of expanding and generalizing theories ‘analytic generalization’, rather than enumerating frequencies ‘statistical generalization’ (see Yin 1999; Barbour 2008). A major rationale for using a case study is when your investigation must cover both a particular phenomenon and the context within which the phenomenon is occurring; it is the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context (Yin 2002; Yin 2003), a condition fitting the issues under investigation in this project and the social-ecological milieu in which they exist, warranting the use of case study.
In my research I adopted the comparative case study method. While single case studies provide interesting insights, Achen and Snidal (1989 p.146 italics original) argue that they do not by themselves provide clear guidance for generalization to other cases. On the other hand, Rhodes (1997 pp.82-83) observes that a comparative case method combines cultural specificity and historical tradition with the capacity to generalize; it fosters the link between the historian’s ‘what-questions’ to the political scientist’s ‘why questions’. Since the three case studies involving forest protected areas were conceptually tied together through the analytical framework on forest governance in the preceding chapter, the generalizations produced are expected to cumulate and become the basic elements of further theory building that can potentially contribute to the body of knowledge on what constitutes good environmental governance. Explaining further the logic of comparative case studies, the authors have aptly claimed: “the goal of general explanatory theory is replaced by the goal of segmented theory, which seeks to identify distinct causal patterns and the conditions under which they occur. In this manner, the multiple case-study approach aims to retain the richness of individual case studies without retreating into ideographic explanation, while simultaneously achieving theoretical generality without becoming lost in abstractions” (Achen and Snidal 1989 p.147).

4.1 Case Selection and the Cases

As earlier mentioned, the aim of my project is to investigate what forest governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing. Of particular interest to me was to study this phenomenon in a tropical developing country setting. The Philippines provided a rich milieu for my purpose especially with its history of having had a highly regulatory, centrally controlled and industry-biased forest policy during the colonial period, and a more decentralized, participatory and people-oriented approach that typified the country’s policy direction over the last three decades. Along with this policy shift was a changing form of forest governance, from the earlier state-centric to more collaborative. While the Philippines formulation of decentralized and community-based forest management policy has been considered as ‘radical and progressive’ (Pulhin 2002 p.37), how it works on the ground is still problematic. A study by Dahal and Capistrano (2006) that examines the strategic
weaknesses in the devolution policy process in the country’s forest management concludes that the level of success of policy outcomes is dependent on the interrelation between the levels of devolution with clear policy articulation on the one hand and quality of governance on the other, citing differences between policy and the complex reality of implementation. The Philippines’ potential to offer interesting lessons and insights for my investigation was a motivation why I chose it as my research locale. Also, as my home country, my familiarity with its socio-political dynamics and ecological landscape was an advantage both theoretically and at the practical level. More importantly, the growth of governance networks that involve collaborative undertakings by state and non-state actors has been a feature of the country’s environmental management domain in the last two decades. As such, it offers fertile ground to study some actual manifestations of how the relatively new form of governance operates and how it has achieved or failed in meeting its objectives.

The selection of the cases to be studied in-depth was facilitated by some knowledge of the cases, supported by the relevant literature. The cases were selected with the prior view that they would most likely be crucial in generating findings that could contribute to building or critiquing governance theories as well as in formulating propositions. Driven by my interest in understanding more deeply the environmental protection - rural development interface, I chose three forest protected areas whose governance mechanisms cover the two-pronged goal of protecting the forests and improving local livelihoods. As discussed in Chapter 1, there are more than two hundred formally declared protected areas in the Philippines, with less than a quarter of which receiving foreign and/or local funding. I narrowed down my selection to the latter, particularly those included in the ten priority protected areas in the country which were considered ‘beneficiaries’ of a World Bank - supported project whose implementation was spearheaded by a multi-sectoral policy-making and governing body. Intrigued by the fact that many of the country’s protected areas seemingly governed by the same ‘institutional hardware’ involving public-private engagements have exhibited different outcomes, I purposively looked into their various modes of governance and used their distinctions as my key basis for the case study screening process.
The three selected cases were indicative of different features that have contributed in shaping their modes of engagement. In particular, the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park appeared to be predominantly ‘donor-driven’; the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, on the other hand, was more ‘networked’; while the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park's operations were very much ‘state-dominated’. These distinctions proved to be important especially in illustrating how processes and practices can differ even though these selected cases are covered by the same policy instruments. I could have chosen forest protected areas that are community-controlled, government-managed, or one operating under a co-management arrangement, respectively, if only to present the stark differences in terms of governance modes. However, in doing so, I would have run the risk of explaining performance relative to these arrangements which is not my objective, as this aim would potentially undermine the specific processes and approaches employed within each; the institutional hardware alone does not determine how the mechanism performs. Conventional debates focusing on pure modes of governance in which state, market, or community actors play the leading role, fall short of the capacity needed, considering the complexity and multi-scalar character of many of the most pressing environmental problems (Lemos and Agrawal 2006).

Moreover, what typifies a declared protected area in the Philippines is one that is managed under the intertwining of many strands of control, such as in the case of the government-hosted multi-stakeholder body that governs most of the country's protected areas like the cases under investigation. I wanted to examine and highlight how the seemingly subtle distinctions in governance features in areas under this same brand of ‘governance regime’ may result to profoundly varying impacts, in order to obtain a ‘thicker’ analysis of how both governance structures and processes affect outcomes and what are their underpinnings. The three selected cases are in theory all under a decentralized government-coordinated multi-stakeholder governance system; this has been however muddled in practice. While the cases share some commonalities, there are factors that spell their differences in the broader socio-political structures and geographical contexts which, as we will find out in the later chapters, are also strong elements influencing the effectiveness in delivering outcomes or in mal-performance. Also, having a case such as Kitanglad which has
several desirable characteristics can also provide firmer bases for making judgments on the causal relations and in making comparisons.

All three case studies demonstrate complexity in their specificities and contexts; without adopting a systematic approach in dealing with them, these could seem to be overwhelming. Given the central question of this project, the analytical framework shown in Chapter 2 has directed my focus in this regard. After some preliminary desktop research and online communications with potential contacts in the field, I formulated sets of open-ended questions relevant to each of the governance criteria (that is, legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination, and resilience) and the core values of distributive justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability (see Appendices 1 and 2 for the sets of questions). While these sets of questions are the same for the three sites, I adopted the recommended ‘flexibility in the question format’ in the sense that I readily modified its wording or its style of questioning to better suit the understanding of the respondents based on their socio-cultural backgrounds, while still maintaining the key idea that needed to be teased out (Warwick and Osherson 1973 p.23). Translations of the questions into Tagalog and Visayan, the major languages used in these parts of the Philippines, were also available and used where applicable. With my proficiency in both local languages, interpretation and understanding of the words being communicated was not problematic; moreover, it also helped the respondents feel more at ease in our interactions. The following section discusses the ways in which I gathered information in the field.

4.2 Accessing Knowledge

My case studies were developed based on many sources of evidence (Yin 2003) drawing from a wide range of techniques in accessing knowledge (Yanow 2003). As a prelude to my fieldwork, I read relevant documents and visited websites to familiarize myself with some dynamics associated with the phenomena as well as the governing and the governed actors to be examined. An important consideration for understanding the consequences of the forest conservation policy and program implementation for the broad range of affected people is obtaining ‘local knowledge’ – the very mundane, but still expert, understanding of and practical reasoning about
local conditions derived from lived experience (Yanow 2003). In accessing the local knowledge of the governance mechanisms operating in each of the three sites, I employed methods that I found appropriate in capturing the information that I needed. In particular, I made use of observation (with some degree of participation in certain instances), reading and taking down notes from local documents such as relevant newspapers, organizational newsletters, minutes of meetings, and other program planning and implementation documents, listening or watching local radio and TV programs, respectively, as well as becoming involved in focus group discussions when an opportunity arose.

These data gathering techniques were meant more to complement the in-depth interviews conducted; these served as my primary source of empirical material for each of the three cases. In Sierra Madre, for instance, after interviewing a member of a household involved in illegal logging, a group of five women seated in a waiting shed was curious about my study and so having experienced their hospitality, I ended up having a discussion with them which enhanced my understanding of the local discourses prevailing in a village where illegal forest activities were so rampant and had become institutionalized. Personal interactions with illegal loggers after attending a meeting of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) also broadened my perspective about the issue. In Kitanglad, a transect walk with a forest guard not only exposed me to the protected area’s topography and an adjacent ‘villagescape’, but gave me the opportunity to elicit information in a manner (walk and talk) that was non-threatening for my respondent, enabling him to better express how he sees the connection between his indigenous culture and the physical environment. On the other hand, the timing of my presence in the Kanlaon site coincided with a court hearing involving the EDC’s (Energy Development Corporation) operations at the protected area’s buffer zone, providing a good opportunity for me to have a glimpse into civil society - state - business dynamics and how the government bureaucracy and its legal arm can be used to promote a private interest over a public good.

The principal mode I employed in accessing knowledge was the conversational or in-depth interview which I carried out for a total of six months in the three study sites. This qualitative research technique involves conducting rigorous one-on-one interviews to explore the respondent’s perspectives about a particular issue under
consideration. It often provides much more detailed information than is available through other methods, and can facilitate a more relaxed atmosphere in which to gather information (Boyce and Neale 2006). The semi-structured interview guides (Appendices 1 and 2) were developed beforehand, and as the fieldwork progressed, some firming up and/or adjustments were made for the subsequent interviews, paying attention to the length of the interview, as well as any complexity or sensitivity of a question that may arise. My familiarity with local dynamics and culture as well as with issues involving forest management was particularly useful in either avoiding such complications or in addressing them when they occurred.

The questions formulated were generally open-ended, enhancing the ability to retain the original ‘flavour’ of the responses. The approach being semi-structured, there was more room for flexibility in terms of the order of the questions, inserting items that were more interesting to the respondents especially at the earlier stage of the interview, without losing sight of the analytical framework reflected in the interview guide. This guide helped in smoothing the transitions between questions, avoiding the transitions being abrupt or disjointed by jumping from one unrelated topic to another. The two interview guides that I prepared were applied in all three case studies and were meant to elicit responses to questions associated with, first, each of the forest governance criteria, and second, to the core values relevant to ecological and human wellbeing.

For the first, I formulated five sets of questions to correspond to the five criteria which I also considered as five themes that later clustered the data under each criterion. Within the first set for example, the open-ended questions touched on issues related to legitimacy as defined in Chapter 2. After each criterion, the respondent was asked to share his/her opinion on how things can be improved for better performance. Having this space provided valuable information that may not have been captured by the earlier responses based on the prepared guide questions. On the other hand, because this was allowed, it may also have resulted in the researcher’s vulnerability to the respondent’s bias, and so it was important to take into account the consistency of interpretations of the answers for analysis purposes.
Identification of potential interviewees was facilitated through conversations with a few initial contacts in each site, coupled with preliminary reading about the protected areas’ respective management plans which sketch the organizations involved in the governance mechanism. While the organizational structure of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) was my first point of reference in looking into who the governing actors were in each site, I did not limit my interviews to its members’ representatives. I included other organizations which have actually been working with the formal or official governing body via other institutional arrangements, formal or otherwise. The interviewees constituting the governing actors were generally key informants, selected on the bases of their involvement and my perception of their influence in collective decisions and actions pertinent to the governance mechanism, and who could potentially provide in-depth, insider information (Mikkelsen 1995). Patton (2002) argues that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry. My key informants from whom I aimed to elicit responses relevant to the governance mechanism structures, processes, and discourses, included representatives of relevant national government agencies, local government units, indigenous peoples and other members of the local communities especially the forest guard volunteers, local and international NGOs, and funding agencies, research organizations, church, as well as business groups.

In addition, to elicit more answers to my set of questions that covered the ‘outcomes’ dimension (that is, in terms of the core values) of the mechanism I wanted to analyze, I conducted another set of in-depth interviews to include representatives of households living inside or at the forest fringes who rely on the natural resources in the site for their livelihoods. These included among others, the indigenous peoples, and other forest dwellers some of whom were involved in swidden farming, charcoal making, illegal logging, as well as fishing in the case of the Agta in the Sierra Madre case. While most of these respondents were not officially involved in governing the protected area, I wanted to ensure that, in addition to answering the main questions linked to human and ecological wellbeing, I also accessed local knowledge and views on how this group of people think the forests should be effectively managed. Their views and values were most especially relevant to issues associated with distributive justice and livelihood protection. However, as far as assessing all the four core values
is concerned, both their responses and those from the governing actors who also include other stakeholders such as the business sector, government and other non-government representatives were duly considered.

Each interview usually ran from 1 to 1.5 hours. The following summarizes the stages I followed towards producing the case study chapters.

4.3 Collating and Processing of Information

I transcribed the information obtained especially through more than 80 in-depth interviews by manually writing them out myself while the interviews were being conducted. While I recognized that this process can be susceptible to my limitation in note taking while at the same time having conversations, I found this approach viable without necessarily sacrificing the quality of the communication, nor the ensuing written output. I was very mindful of capturing as much as possible the substance of any information that was shared while simultaneously trying to interpret, translate into English, and write the account as close as possible to what was originally conveyed. One of the advantages in doing this was that whenever I was not sure about my understanding, interpretation, or translation, I could ask the respondent involved right away to give the clarification needed before writing it down. One factor in why this worked for me was my proficiency in the local languages used by the interviewees and my familiarity with their culture and localities.

The transcriptions as well as the printed and electronic documents I gathered all formed part of the raw data obtained through several techniques. I again utilized my analytical framework as a guide in systematically organizing these materials for each of my case studies, employing analytical tools such as clustering of the data using the framework's criteria and core values as the categories. The way I partly structured my in-depth interview guides was also facilitative of this grouping, although given the open-ended nature of my questions and the flexibility entailed, the responses - the raw data entered under a specific criterion (i.e. category) - may also find a welcoming space in other categories. The process of clustering was not a simple transfer of notes but a process that had already required analysis and interpretation, finding consistencies and locating them in my analytical framework. A helpful way of doing
this was to make a matrix in which, from the data gathered, I selected the salient points and discourses for each criterion and core value in each case. From every set of salient points, I proceeded to make some generalizations, and from the latter, I identified key messages and patterns which I used in producing an improved version of the matrix where I juxtaposed the three cases. This led to a better appreciation as well as, a critique of relevant concepts and theories as well as building propositions for environmental governance drawn from my findings that responded to the question on what governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing. From here, the writing of the case studies and the comparative analysis followed.

(Table 1 provides a glimpse of the cases showing a summary of the interviews conducted.)
Table 1. Overview of the case studies and in-depth interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Number of interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park</strong></td>
<td>Dominant governance mode: donor-driven Location: Luzon (Northern Philippines) Fieldwork period: January-April, 2010 Major language used: Tagalog</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviewees’ categories:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National and local governments 2 + 3 = 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local and INGOs 2 + 7 = 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indigenous peoples &amp; forest-dependent 2 + 13 = 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park</strong></td>
<td>Dominant governance mode: networked Location: Mindanao (Southern) Fieldwork period: April-May, 2010 Major language used: Visayan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviewees’ categories:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National and local governments 3 + 5 = 8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local and INGOs 4 + 1 = 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indigenous peoples &amp; forest-dependent 5 + 5 = 10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Business 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mt. KanlaonNatural Park</strong></td>
<td>Dominant governance mode: state-dominated Location: Visayas (Central) Fieldwork: June – July, 2010 Major language used: Visayan</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interviewees’ categories:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National and local government 5 + 5 = 10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local and INGOs 7 + 0 =7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indigenous peoples &amp; forest-dependent 2 + 8 = 10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Business 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Concluding Remarks

Adapting to the growing governance networks, the methods employed to gather information for my research project were both institutional and interpretative in their approach and pragmatic in their orientation. These methods still acknowledge the importance of examining institutions, but the institution conceptualized as a two-sided mechanism, with discourse(s) playing an often overlooked but significant role. As it was deliberately aimed to better capture evolving societal processes and dynamics in which state-centric governance no longer dominates as the ‘rule of the game’, the interpretative approach adopted by this thesis matches the primary method used – a comparative case study employing a variety of techniques in accessing knowledge and in trying to investigate forest governance mechanisms. The methodology was developed to be capable of teasing out patterns, key messages, and lessons manifested in donor-driven, networked, and state-dominated governance cases. These cases are elucidated in the next three chapters.
CHAPTER 4
CASE STUDY 1: THE NORTHERN SIERRA MADRE NATURAL PARK

1. Introduction

The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park (NSMNP)\(^5\) is an interesting case to study especially in relation to global actors’ role in forest governance. I selected this case because of its extensive foreign donor involvement, both in terms of number, and amount (see Van Den Top, 2003), but the extent to which that proves to make a difference (or not) is an empirical question. There is a long history of legal and illegal logging in Sierra Madre’s poverty-stricken areas; and its declaration as a natural park is highly contested. The complexity of its issues makes innovative resolution of dilemmas or the balancing of trade-offs in forest conservation more challenging. How the financial and technical assistance from global actors plays out and influences operations on the ground when confronted with local realities is among the important points to explore.

The decentralization trend has been partly propelled by infusions of material and technical support from these donors who sought better forest governance from recipient countries (Agrawal et al. 2008). Despite huge foreign funding however, the ‘backlash’ of a ‘persistent incongruity’ between concept and practice is evident, as exemplified by the low success of foreign-funded, co-managed forestry programmes. The “old bureaucratic pattern of project implementation still prevails” which is basically top-down and prescriptive (Pasicolan 2002 p.87). An example is the US$240 million worth (borrowed from ADB and the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan) contract reforestation for the DENR which fell short of its 1992 target due to unsustainable local participation (Pasicolan 2002).

Following the context provided below, this chapter describes and examines the forest governance mechanism employed in NSMNP in terms of legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination, and resilience, using the framework presented in

\(^5\) I use ‘Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park’ interchangeably with NSMNP or ‘Sierra Madre’ in relevant discussions of the thesis.
Chapter 2. I discuss the state of the forests and peoples’ wellbeing in terms of the following: distributive justice, livelihood protection, ecosystem protection, and sustainability. I then try to elucidate how these core values have either, been promoted, maintained, or undermined by some structures and processes associated with the governance mechanism employed.

2. Ecological and Social Context

**Land Cover, Forest Resources, and Biodiversity**

Along the eastern coast of Luzon is the Sierra Madre Mountain Range of which the northern portion is referred to as the Northern Sierra Madre. With a total size of 360,000 ha (270,000 ha terrestrial and 90,000 ha marine habitats), the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park (NSMNP) is the largest, and one of the ten (10) priority protected areas in the Philippines, holding 25% of the remaining primary lowland forest of the archipelago (Nordic Agency for Development and Ecology and DENR 1998 in van der Ploeg et al. 2011). It harbours most of Luzon’s last lowland dipterocarp rain forest, montane forest, mangroves and beach forest (Minter 2009). The dominant vegetation in the area is Dipterocarpacea -tall, slow-growing tree species that flower only every five to seven years (Jakobs 1981 in van den Top 2003).

Before the park was established in 1997, an exploratory biodiversity survey conducted in 1990-1991 by a consortium of local and international organizations including the PhilippinesDENR, the Danish Ornithological Society, Leiden University Rijksherbarium, the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, the University of the Philippines, Conservation International, Birdlife International, CVPED, and other organizations produced a preliminary estimate that the area is likely to contain at least 60 per cent of the Philippines’ overall biodiversity and a number of new plant species (CI 1990). Identified as highly important for biodiversity conservation, sixty-three globally threatened and near-threatened wildlife species have been recorded in the park, more than any other protected area in the country (Tan 2000 in Persoon and van Weerd 2006), and sixty to eighty-five percent of all species in Luzon are present in the park (Van Weerd 2002).
The NSMNP is located in Isabela province of Cagayan Valley region in Luzon. It covers nine municipalities. The total land area of those at the coastal side, namely: Maconacon, Divilacan, and Palanan are included in the declared protected area. For the other six (6) non-coastal towns of Dinapigue, San Pablo, Cabagan, Tumauini, Ilagan and San Mariano, the inclusion is limited to the uninhabited parts of their municipalities. The adopted protected area management plan divided the park into different zones: the *multiple-use zone* is designated for areas where people live, surrounded by a *buffer zone* where sustainable use of natural resources is allowed; and the *strict protection zone* covering 70% of the park is off-limits for human activities with the exception of those undertaken by the indigenous peoples in the area (Persoon and van Weerd 2006). Logging and the use of destructive fishing and hunting methods (such as fishing with electricity, dynamite or pesticides, and hunting with snare traps) are prohibited in the strict protection zones.

Figure 3. Map of Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park

Source: NSMNP-CP & DENR 2001

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6 Interview with members of forest dwelling communities
Local Communities and Livelihood

The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park is home to indigenous peoples, primarily the Agta who depend on the forests for their livelihoods and cultural life. Around 23,000 people live within park boundaries, with an estimated 2000 Agta among them (DENR 2001) living in and directly adjacent to the NSMNP. These indigenous peoples reside in more than 80 semi-permanent coastal and riverside settlements, most of which are at a walking distance of several hours from farming communities. Generally speaking, they follow a foraging economy in which they exchange wild meat, fish, non-timber forest products, and timber with non-Agta for domestic starch and consumer products. They also practice extensive agriculture and are involved as seasonallaborers on nearby farms (Minter 2009).

The coastal portion of the protected area where most of the Agta live could not be reached by road transport from the valley side where the provincial government and other offices and commercial centers are located. The absence of a lateral road across the mountains leaves these indigenous peoples and other coastal villagers with only two options: a time-consuming and risky boat trip via the northern town of San Vicente, Cagayan, or via Baler, Aurora, in the south; or a faster but much more expensive air travel with the sole airlinethat operates irregularly between Cauayan and Palanan (van den Top 2003). Palanan, a permanent settlement for more than 300 years, has the largest population in the park, with 16,000 people (van der Ploeg et al. 2011).

The Cagayan Valley which comprises Isabela (where the NSMNP is located), and the provinces of Nueva Viscaya, Quirino, Cagayan, and Batanes, is one of the 6 poorest regions in the Philippines (Hill 2008 p.55). An estimated 1.5 million of its people rely on the hydrological services that the park provides (van der Ploeg, et al. 2011). Most of those living in and around this protected area live below the poverty threshold, and depend on forest resources for food and cash (DENR 2001). They are usually involved in gathering of fuel woods, charcoal making, bamboo and rattan harvesting, kaingin or slash-and-burn farming, as well as hunting and fishing especially for the Agta. The migrants among them who came from different provinces

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1 In order for me to reach the Agta communities during my fieldwork, I had to take the 9 seater plane to Palanan to the Pacific side of the area in 45 minutes, spending 2,000 pesos (USD48) for a one-way flight alone; or the equivalent to 1 month salary of many labourers, or house helpers in the country.
of the country were mostly workers or descendants of workers of the logging companies that operated on the fringes of the park during the logging boom of the 1960s to early 1980s. This part of its history has shaped many locals’ involvement in logging which despite being illegal at present is still an important source of income for many and has in fact remained rampant inside the park even recently. 8

The rapid decline of the industrial logging operations in the 1990s accordingly left many former logging employees with a serious income crisis. The early 1990s was characterized by extraction of the remaining stocks of commercial timber by local people- the new communities of forest migrants who came into the forest lands attracted by the economic boom of the logging industry. With the latter’s closure, they pioneered carabao logging9. The cancellation and suspensions of Timber License Agreements (TLA) by 1992 had also created approximately one million ha of accessible residual and old growth forest in the Sierra Madre alone, encouraging illegal logging. Carabao logging as a mode of timber extraction by forest migrants was already practiced during the corporate logging period but became more rampant later when many more of those formerly involved in corporate logging also joined in this activity when the latter was banned. Although illegal10, and is only done part-time11, its revenues constitute as much as 60 per cent of overall household income (Huijbregts 1996 in van den Top 2003) or based on my findings, even more.

Lenience in law enforcement is illustrated by the furniture industry in Cagayan Valley region which makes almost exclusive use of the legally prohibited Narra. Since 1990, the carabao loggers have been able to supply all the required wood in the region’s thriving business (Huigen 1997, in van den Top 2003) which is widely promoted by local leaders, including trade and industry officials who advertise it as potentially propelling Cagayan Valley to national and international markets. Wood furniture shops registered with the Department of Trade and Industries declared that the average monthly consumption per manufacturer for the hardwood narra or

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8 Based on my personal interview with some illegal loggers in the area (2010)
9 ‘Carabao logging’ uses carabao instead of heavy machines to haul wood products (commercial species including Narra trees) from the forest to the community or to a waterway. This is commonly employed in illegal logging.
10 After 1994, carabao logging has been subject to regulations under the Community Forestry Programme (van den Top 2003, p.100).
11 The primary actors in this activity are the same people dealing with upland agriculture, and in many cases involved as corporate logging labourers (van den Top 2003, p.97).
rosewood is 1,500 board feet (or 3.6 cubic meters) while that of other common hardwood is 622 board feet. Some shop owners argue that these figures are much lower than the actual average wood requirement per shop which is actually around 3000 board feet for narra and 1,200 board feet for other common hardwood. Investigation by Greenpeace reveals that the provincial DENR officers in Cagayan Valley have asked the shop owners to downplay their statistics on wood requirements in order to avoid triggering perception that this government agency is not upholding current restrictions on logging (Greenpeace 2006).

Land-use Change, Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Widespread logging and shifting cultivation practices have reduced the forest resources to 25 percent of its 1950s’ level by early 1990s. Year 1982 marked the height of the region’s logging boom, when a total of forty-four corporate timber licenses were active, varying in size from 30,000 to 220,000 ha, with a cumulative annual allowable cut (ACC) of 2.4 million m3 of timber (van den Top 2003). During this period, private concessions basically managed the public forests on the basis of 25-year licenses to often urban-based businessmen, army generals and others in close contact with high government official, including the President of the country. They occasionally arrive in the area by private plane or helicopter to meet with local staff and government officials. The most influential timber licensee throughout the martial law period was accordingly ‘Don’ Alfredo Lim whose business conglomerate managed approximately half of the northern Sierra Madre forest by the early 1980s; not surprising for a man who had supported and financed the career of Ferdinand Marcos since the 1960s.

Each year approximately 25,000 ha of old growth forest in the region were converted into residual strands of varying quality. Former employees of contractors operating in a concession in Isabelarecountthat every logging season, ten bulldozer teams, each with two to three chainsaw operators, were operating inside the concession, and that the company had 300 logging trucks hauling logs from various concessions and cutting areas. Based on a conservative estimate (excluding illegal extraction) between 1970 and 1990, Timber Licensing Agreement (TLA) holders and their contractors

12Based on presentation/background paper relating to request to the DENR, among others for an amnesty grant for illegally-sourced wood materials
extracted timber worth at least US$1.7 billion from natural forests of the northern Sierra Madre (van den Top 2003 pp.65-77). As in the Philippines as a whole, the number of corporate logging concessions in operations dropped sharply during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Illegal logging causes deforestation and forest degradation in the area, posing a serious threat to biodiversity and rural livelihoods. Researchers have argued that timber is harvested in all lowland dipterocarp forest areas of the NSMNP, particularly on the western side. They have estimated that 20,000 to 35,000 cu. m wood per year is illegally extracted from the park, representing a minimal market value of 238 million PHP (4,750,000 USD). By way of comparison, they aver that the annual allowable cut of the three remaining logging concessions in Isabela combined is 37,794 cu. m (van der Ploeg et al. 2011, p.206). Some government officials’ contend that banning ‘illegal’ logging as a livelihood activity aggravates rural poverty; this way of thinking however ‘underestimates the scale of timber extraction’ that has destroyed the forest ecosystem (van der Ploeg et al. 2011, p.202). While it is true that a significant section of the local communities gain income from the activity, other villagers living along the forest fringes and beyond have been adversely affected. Some complain that logging trucks destroy farm-to-market roads; that logging disturbs wildlife; that fish catches have declined due to erosion and silting; and that it is one of the main causes of flooding in the area.\(^{13}\)

Forest Resource Use Regulation and Conservation Governance Framework

In 1997, Presidential Proclamation 978 declared the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park as part of the NIPAS. In 1998, a Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) was established, and in 2001, a management plan for the park was adopted (DENR 2001). The PAMB is NSMNP’s key governing body originally consisting of thirty seven (37) members: the provincial governor, the mayors of the nine municipalities covered, several barangay captains (village heads), twelve representatives of the indigenous peoples of the area, a youth representative, a women’s group representative and three other representatives of civil society organizations such as the academe, church, and other NGOs. Chairing the board is the regional director of the DENR which is charged with the implementation of PAMB decisions. For this

\(^{13}\) Personal interview with the locals.
purpose, a protected area superintendent unit was established within the DENR that consists of a head, administrative staff and forest rangers who are tasked to patrol the protected area and enforce the rules and regulations.  

Combating illegal logging is a goal widely accepted by stakeholders. The enforcement of the campaign to halt or at least regulate illegal activities has however been tainted with anomaly. The decade following the designation of the area as part of NIPAS saw connivance of some DENR personnel with illegal loggers from both the private sector and the local communities. Local government officials such as mayors and village captains were also involved. The NIPAS Implementing Rules and Regulations provide that one of the PAMB’s functions is to ‘monitor and evaluate the performance of protected area personnel, NGOs and the local communities in providing for biodiversity conservation and socio-cultural and economic development and report their assessments to the Integrated Protected Area Fund (IPAF) Governing Board’ which is composed of the ‘DENR Secretary or his duly authorized representative as ex-officio chairman of the Board; two (2) from the DENR or other government agency; two (2) from duly accredited NGOs which have proven track records in the field of conservation management; and two (2) representing indigenous communities’ (Sections 18 and 62, DENR Administrative Order No.25 Series of 1992).

Regulation in the more recent period, particularly within 2008-2010 through the Provincial Forest Protection Task Force, was relatively more effective but has triggered different reactions. For the broader communities, the interventions aimed at protecting the forests have been perceived to be appropriate. However, from the perspective of many local people who were formerly dependent on illegal logging for subsistence, and of those who live in the coastal towns fully designated as ‘protected areas’ and are remotely situated from the market, such regulation was considered to be too harsh as it adversely impacted their means of livelihoods, undermining their capacity to help protect the forest in a sustainable way.

14 Ibid. and my personal interviews with members of the PAMB, 2010
15 Personal interviews with both ‘governing actors’ and ordinary villagers, 2010
16 Personal interviews with illegal loggers and other forest-dependent people, 2010
One of the features evident in the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park has been the presence of a number of international actors. In 1996, at least eight internationally funded conservation and development initiatives operated in the area. Among them, two major integrated conservation and development projects supported the establishment of the park, and the set-up of its management from 1996 to 2002. One was the World Bank-funded Philippines Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project which allocated to the park a portion of the $20 M grant for the 10 sites in the country, supporting the establishment of a decentralized, community-based management structure for individual Protected Areas based on Protected Area Management Boards (PAMBs). Complementing it was the Dutch-funded Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park-Conservation Project ($5.6 M grant) which was implemented during its first phase by Plan International. Its second phase was implemented by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), but had to be stopped before the project officially ended. Another conservation project got funding from Conservation International (CI) (van den Top 2003; see also Persoon & van Weerd 2006; van der Ploeg et al. 2011).

Beyond the PAMBs, international actors have a strong influence in the formulation and implementation of forest policies in the country. The Philippines Master Plan for Forestry Development which is considered to be the most comprehensive document, setting out concrete new directions and prescribing benchmarks to be achieved by the country’s Forestry Sector during a twenty-five-year period starting 1992, was co-funded by the Asian Development Bank, the Government of the Philippines, and the Finnish International Development Agency (van den Top 2003). In the NSMNP in particular, bilateral and multilateral agencies’ funding support in project implementation was too big not to get recognized. As earlier mentioned however, the biggest projects among them were not really able to complete their cycle as intended due to (mis)management issues.

The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park presents a case of a priority conservation area that was highly oiled in terms of funding to support program operations during its first few years after its declaration as a protected area. Multilateral and bilateral donor agencies were ‘lining up to get involved’ (Persoon & van Weerd 2006 p.94).
Earlier on, international NGOs were enthusiastic in their engagements with various actors in the area. The establishment of the park obtained full consent from local authorities of the municipalities involved. Its operations were fundamentally steered by a multi-stakeholder decision-making body, and it was backed up by what is apparently an enabling policy framework. Notwithstanding all these, both relevant documents and people's feedbacks generally tell a gloomy scenario characterized by disappointments over the results in both social and ecological fronts. As other researchers have put it, 'despite the legal recognition and international funding, the NSMNP remains a 'paper park' (van der Ploeg et al. 2011 p.205).

The case under investigation provides rich experiences that can be unpacked to better understand various interactions between and among local and global actors, and the associated institutional dynamics that influence outcomes for forests and people. The following section is based on empirical data drawn from the perspectives of both state and non-state actors having either official or informal involvement in conservation and development program operations in the area at certain points within the late 1990s until the last decade. It discusses the park's governance mechanism in relation to the criteria outlined in Chapter 2.

3. Forest Governance Criteria

3.1 Legitimacy

Input legitimacy calls for inclusiveness, and involvement among stakeholders in key processes affecting them. The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park illustrates that both the structure and the objectives of a governance mechanism may say too little in reality about what it theoretically represents, and so examining its legitimacy should not lose sight of the status of the overall mechanism. Its PAMB's composition for example, reflects the above intention of designing a decentralized, community-based management structure. How the members of such a multi-stakeholder body have actually been interacting, influencing decision-making processes, and shaping the institutional arrangements that facilitate actions on the ground is however a different story.
Both state and non-state actors were represented in the key policy-making and governing body of the park. These include the indigenous peoples (IP) who in fact had a relatively high representation in terms of number during the earlier phase. With the exit of the donor agencies however, the 12 representatives were reduced to 1 due to budgetary constraint. This consequently reduced the legitimacy of the decision-making processes in the eyes of the indigenous peoples. It weakened the quality of their participation during Board meetings that were generally dominated by the members who were ‘formally educated’ and already ‘highly positioned’ in terms of influence. The same thing can be said on the governance mechanism’s objectives. The aims of environmental protection and rural livelihoods improvement were initially welcomed by the locals with enthusiasm, but this has waned in the course of the actual implementation of the program. This two-pronged initiative was perceived to be appropriate given the rampant illegal logging and the poverty situation that characterized the area. The nuances in the implementation however affected its outcomes and the people’s views of the latter.

Local participation is also important in legitimizing a conservation mechanism. But what kind of local participation enhances output legitimacy? As discussed in Chapter 2, output legitimacy is associated with a governance mechanism’s effectiveness in performance and collective problem-solving. A closer study of the NSMNP case shows that the involvement of the indigenous peoples and other local communities has been tokenistic and instrumental, rather than transformative. They are mostly hired as forest guards and guides or as laborers in reforestation projects, i.e., their motivation for involvement in the rehabilitation work is solely based on economic incentives. While the latter is important, the absence of the kind of participation that empowers communities and makes them realize their significant role in resource conservation can hardly sustain an effort when monetary support runs out. Moreover, the government’s bias for forestry for production purposes is still evident in the DENR’s ways of engaging with the locals. Other than its involvement in foreign-funded projects which disappeared when the projects finished or got pulled out, hardly any initiative to genuinely include the communities’ voices in more meaningful decision-making processes in the management of the protected area came from the national government agency.
The legitimacy of the conservation and development mechanism in terms of output for both forests and people is also problematic. While there is no doubt that environmental awareness among the local populace has increased with massive lobbying against illegal logging as well as mining in the area, the effectiveness of efforts in addressing the issues was nonetheless questionable. As one community organizer has shared, “When we came here in 1996, children of mayors owning saw mills involved in illegal logging operations were an ordinary sight. They slowly disappeared in the coastal towns covered by the project. When external facilitators left the area as the projects ended however, illegal logging came back...”.

When it comes to the livelihood component of the mechanism, there were varying degrees of appreciation by the locals. While the small irrigation project and agroforestry were seen to be both relevant to the communities for instance, the former was generally considered successful while the latter was not in terms of their implementation. We see here a link between output and input legitimacy as the failure in the implementation of agroforestry has been associated to the project design and the lack of flexibility on the part of the implementing international NGO. For example, many respondents remember truckloads of seedlings delivered to the villages, without enough technical staff who can give assistance on what to do with them. When I asked a representative of the project implementers about it, he said that they have set large targets in the project design document and because their ‘mother organization’ is target-oriented and expenditure-driven, expecting 85% of the project funds to be spent at a particular period of time, they felt pressured to purchase what was expected at that time. Although he acknowledged that they could have opted for simple and realistic targets at the very start, he pointed out the importance of flexibility given the difficulty in controlling some things happening on the ground, which seems to be wanting on the part of the implementing agency.

Output legitimacy was shaped by input legitimacy built or destroyed in the interaction among stakeholders, i.e., the governing and the governed actors. Both state and non-state actors are well represented in the Sierra Madre governance mechanism. The case illustrates however that sectoral representation does not necessarily translate to voices of most representatives being heard or incorporated in

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17 Interview with a former field staff member of a major foreign-funded project implemented in the PA
18 Interview with a project leader of one of the 2 major projects
decision-making. Representation is still contentious. Moreover, the case also shows that this kind of representation is not always feasible given logistical constraints, nor is it always desirable considering language and power differences among actors involved in decision-making.

3.2 Accountability

Accountability requires the governing actors to be held accountable to the governed who are affected by their collective decisions and actions. While an earlier mentioned provision of a DENR Administrative Order reflects an upward accountability by the involved sectors in the governance mechanism, it is silent as to how the PAMB member representatives will be called to account for any of their practices or malpractice. We also note that with the criterion on selecting the 2 NGO representatives in the IPAF Board at the national level, there seems to be a bias for ‘conservation’, rather than both conservation and rural development which sum up the NIPAS objectives and the PAMB duties.

Moreover, the Sierra Madre case shows that this upward accountability mechanism has not really been effectively functioning. The reporting system that is operational is one that involves the Protected Area Superintendent and staff (serving as PAMB secretariat) with the DENR regional, to central office. The PAMB secretariat being DENR staff themselves, it looks like the only actual upward accountability measure can just be part of a bureaucratic requirement of a national government agency. In other words, as far as the PAMB and its relationship upward is concerned the only ones interacting in terms of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are DENR people themselves, which also raises a question of the authenticity of a system which under the law claims to be inclusive of stakeholders.

An ineffective upward accountability mechanism notwithstanding, let us closely examine how PAMB members are held accountable by each other and by the sectoral members they represent. The presence of other representatives in this governing Body does not seem to create an effective pressure in neutralizing the DENR’s ‘dominance’ in decision-making processes. This has been manifested for example in the agency’s continued role as the approving authority on matters otherwise expected to be
handled by the Board itself (e.g. rattan extraction and timber license agreements), making other members, such as the indigenous peoples’ representative, confused.

There is little question that a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism is in place (be it formal or informal) with relative efficacy in each of the respective organizations represented in PAMB. The INGOs for example have their own M&E system. The indigenous peoples on the other hand follow their traditional ways of cooperation and giving of relevant sanctions. For the national agency such as the DENR, an accountability structure is employed within its system; while the local government units (provincial, municipal, to barangay ‘village’ levels) also provide their constituents the opportunity to hold their representatives responsible for their actions. What is not clear cut however is the accountability feature when all these state and non-state actors form a multi-stakeholder governance body such as the PAMB, a gap in collaborative arrangements which when left unaddressed can adversely affect performance.

Actual implementations show that for a considerably long time since the establishment of the NSMNP, some DENR and local government officials including members of the PAMB were in cahoots with the illegal loggers. Patronage politics and ‘under the table transactions’ were very prevalent. On the part of the DENR, an observable weakness is on the application of sanctions. It has been a common practice that personnel violating regulations, no matter how blatant, are simply transferred to other areas of jurisdiction. Someone found guilty of conniving in illegal logging will still continue with his official functions, but in a different province or location.

Questions of accountability are not only true in the case of a national government agency; the same can be said with regards to local governments. Why do some local government officials continue to get involved in illegal logging in Sierra Madre without apparently being threatened by voters? Some reasons could include the following: 1) Government officials’ violation of the law produces an economic benefit to their constituents; 2) weak accountability mechanism within the government system enables illegal activities to thrive, as well as prolong the reliance by a significant number of villagers on illegal logging for livelihoods. This in turn
develops a culture of tolerance to violations of forest policies; and 3) lack of genuine participation by civil society in the overall decision-making authority.

Consider for instance a mayor who is a PAMB member; he finances illegal logging, and employs 3 barangay captains (village heads), who in turn hire a number of the villagers as part of the operation. In poverty-stricken communities, it would be easy for the people to be attracted to such a chain of engagements especially knowing that at the top are their own elected government authorities. However repugnant, the power of incentives and penalties respectively tied to some material gains or damage is palpable. It was exhibited when in 2010 Philippines elections, the then incumbent governor who during her administration had significantly reduced illegal logging, lost her bid for a second term. My respondents attributed her election defeat to, among others, the adverse effect of strict environmental law enforcement on local livelihoods. The candidate who won campaigned for the construction of road across the protected area that would give the coastal towns better access to the market. These were also the towns where the former governor got extremely low votes. The results came as a surprise for many of the former governor’s supporters given that she toppled down a strong political dynasty in northern Philippines when she first ran for election, and she is also famous in the country for her good governance advocacy.

If in some cases government officials involved are not held accountable neither by higher authorities nor their constituents, participation from the broader civil society can be the only hope to pressure politics for the collective good. But what kind of civil society participation can enhance accountability? The case of PAMB in the NSMNP surely did not work: while state actors don’t have the credibility to hold others accountable; non-state actors have been too beholden to the donors that in subtle but profound ways, they have allowed external mandates to prevail over local realities. We then try to examine again the issue of representation. A sectoral and proportional representation characterizes PAMB as the governing body. While this creates an enabling condition for a ‘check and balance measure’, as I have said earlier, it is not sufficient, and is not often realistic given the material constraints affecting some people who ought to be represented such as in the case of the Agta and other marginalized populations.
Vertical and downward accountability has often been wanting if not fragmenting brought about by differences in priorities. Complicating the situation in the case at hand is the absence of integrity among many authorities. But even if we assume that representatives are generally credible, as they engage with each other within PAMB, horizontal accountability can easily be diluted by the multiplicity of mandates, agendas, and interests involved. Here, we see the significance of communication and deliberation’s role in aligning ideas with the overall goal of conservation and development, and its associated discourses. Otherwise, despite all the good intentions, discussions among decision-makers can get easily side-tracked, losing sight of the specific areas that demand accountability.

3.3 Cost-Efficiency

Efficiency as a criterion of environmental governance is often regarded to compete with legitimacy. A tension can happen for instance when increasing legitimacy would also mean a substantial increase of cost in terms of time, money, and other resources incurred by employing processes that are more inclusive and participatory. In the Sierra Madre case, avoiding big financial cost meant reducing Agta representatives from 12 to 1 in the PAMB, which as I have mentioned above had consequently reduced the governance mechanism’s legitimacy in the eyes of the indigenous peoples. Inclusive participation is considered an important normative principle in assessing the democratic legitimacy of environmental governance arrangement (Lovbrand and Khan 2010). Does a higher legitimacy of procedure always entail more cost in terms of time and money? Are there ways to resolve the dilemma? These to me require hard thinking and serious attention especially in the context of the financially-constrained rural communities which typify many other forested places in developing countries. The case at hand underscores this point.

I highlight some details on local costs and capacities because they do have implications in the attendance of marginalized peoples’ representatives in policy meetings and decision-making. It is not surprising for instance that the PAMB could no longer afford to shoulder the expenses entailed on transportation and food of indigenous peoples’ representatives previously shouldered by foreign funding. If an Agta and other representatives from the coastal areas like the village heads opt for the
cheaper transportation option (that is, by boat) in order to be present during their quarterly and other special meetings that are usually held at the DENR office at the city center, they also face higher opportunity costs given their livelihood activities forgone during the longer time spent travelling in the sea.

In few occasions, the PAMB members hold their meeting in the coastal towns which is more enabling in getting better attendance from local representatives in that side of the protected area. While the practice is appreciated by the locals and has facilitated a more inclusive participation, it shifted the cost to the rest of the members of the PAMB. With budgetary limitation, this is something that is rarely practiced. The Integrated Protected Areas Fund (IPAF) mechanism was established by the NIPAS Act, with revenues generated within protected areas for the purpose of promoting the sustained financing of the PA system (DENR DAO No.25, series of 1992). In theory, even the user fees alone can already financially sustain the NSMNP’s management and protection. In reality however, the income gained in the park through this mechanism is undoubtedly not enough to pay for an effective protection system, not to mention the constraining national bureaucratic requirements in availing it.

Worth noting is the fact that the whole of Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park covering 360,000 ha has only 1 DENR forest guard responsible for every 3,000 ha with a monthly transportation allowance of 300 pesos (USD8) only19. While more or less the same limitation is observable in other protected areas, the governance mechanisms of the latter address it by mobilizing volunteers to complement or even assume the primary role of the national government agency’s personnel in guarding the forests. Granting this strategy was followed in Sierra Madre, it still does not erase the fact that its much larger area can be more costly and therefore even calls for more creative ways in order for the mechanism to be efficient. It seems unrealistic for its DENR PAMB secretariat to sustain the same financially costly participatory approaches that other PAs might be able to afford. It is not that the governing actors have not recognized the value of inclusiveness, but given the current set-up, conventional practices, and limitations, the principle’s actualization is simply not feasible.

19 From then incumbent Governor’s speech during the Cagayan Valley ‘Regional Summit on Forest Management and Protection’ 22 March 2010
When asked regarding challenges encountered during project operations, representatives of an implementing international development NGO have raised concerns on costs brought about by the organization’s bureaucracy. A respondent who used to lead the implementation of a major project in the area argues that decision-making at their central office regarding administrative matters related to proposed field activities generally consumes too much time with associated paper trail; and that it takes awhile before the management and field staff could operate on the ground. A former community organizer of an international conservation group on the other hand has expressed a complaint about the top down approach of their organization, saying that she has to wait for directives from higher management personnel and does not have the authority to make meaningful decisions at her level; and that the consultants employed are rarely in the field, raising transaction costs when dealing with them.

A project design can look promising at the outset that it is easy to overlook the nuances in both administrative level and on the ground which can actually break what was originally intended unless innovative mechanisms are applied in due course. Both state and non-state actors in the official governing body and beyond have hardly manifested cost-efficiency in decision-making. In the case of the implementing international NGOs, a complex bureaucracy serves as a barrier to efficiency and effectiveness. For the PAMB’s part, it endeavoured to apply participatory approach to be more inclusive, but its high costs in terms of time and money did not match the low quality of the desired outcomes. Given the geographical scale of Sierra Madre, there is more reason for its governance mechanism to trim down the bureaucratic layers involved, and employ flexibility in decision-making. Moreover, it needs some rethinking on the conventional notion of representation and conceptualize one that is cost-efficient without necessarily sacrificing legitimacy in the process.

3.4 Coordination

Coordination among forest governance actors in the context of particular decisions is important for a governance mechanism to gain higher joint benefits given the ‘collective quality’ of many problems confronting forest ecosystem. This is highly called for especially in the Sierra Madre case where coordination has the potential to contribute to its much needed cost-efficiency given its geographical scale coupled
with logistical and manpower limitations. The case under consideration however exhibits low level of coordination among actors within a particular collective choice. This is evident for instance in the governance mechanism’s campaign against illegal logging. There are a number of actors relevant to this complex issue: these include but are not limited to local government officials, forest-dependent peoples, wood furniture shop owners, and several national government agencies beyond the DENR and the Philippines National Police (PNP) or the military. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for instance, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the Department of Agrariculture (DA) are among the key players that are strategically positioned which when truly collaborated with can most likely help formulate and implement more comprehensive and sustainable solutions. Nothing much is observed however when it comes to initiatives linking agencies for collective actions.

While the mechanism’s weakness when it comes to coordination at broader scales is evident, there have been pockets of coordinated efforts against illegal logging that were happening on the ground. Key among them for example were some earlier local church-led movements which include among others human barricades in which hundreds of people prevented trailers from taking illegal logs out of the area. This concerted action in particular led to a) a dialogue involving different sectors affected by the logging moratorium such as furniture makers, charcoal producers, etc.b) the creation of a Multi-Sectoral Forest Protection Committee even before the PAMB was operational; c) and a Memorandum of Agreement signed between the group and the DENR. However, as the committee was successful in mobilizing local support, raising environmental awareness, and in confiscating truckloads of illegal logs, the DENR turned its back against them, finding ways to discredit and abolish the group for the obvious reason that it was incompatible with some DENR key personnel’s ‘under the table transactions’ with illegal loggers. One of the barriers of coordination as depicted in this particular situation is the low level of legitimacy and accountability on the part of the state actors aggravated by the credibility question. This underscores the importance of a pluralism of actors in which we can expect a more inclusive representation of interests and values that can potentially raise the accountability of a governance mechanism.

20 Based on an interview with the parish priest spearheading the initiative, and a position paper from the group
While pluralism of actors is an important element for better sustainability of a coordinated effort, it does not however stand on its own as the Sierra Madre PAMB has shown. This governing body is relatively well represented by different state and non-state representatives, yet there is a low level of inter-agency collaboration both within the Board and across other relevant decision-making bodies. One reason which could account for this is the governing actors’ focus on physical targets more than social process (Pasicolan 2003). Overwhelmed by pressures to meet the targeted field accomplishments in a given period as prescribed by international funding agencies, there is a great tendency to prioritize meeting the often quantitative targets over taking into account the dynamics of actors in decision-making processes.

Although the PAMB supposedly assumes the overall management of the park in collaboration with other sectors, programme implementations were basically donor-driven. Objectives were typically short-sighted as they tend to be limited by what the donors expected. This became more evident when foreign-funded initiatives could not be sustained beyond the projects’ cycles as they have not been integrated in local processes and institutions. Even a harmonization of fundamental laws has not been attended to. The National Integrated Protected Areas Systems Act of 1992 and the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997 for example, have provisions that need to get ironed out for the benefit of the indigenous peoples, yet this remains unresolved partly because the concerned national agencies rarely engaged with each other. As one respondent has commented: “The DENR and the NCIP seem to be not looking at them as a common problem to be solved or a shared responsibility, but rather a turf to be protected...”

Coordination has also been weak when it comes to conservation and livelihoods-enhancement activities. In some upland communities of the country, one of the factors I have observed why farmers have not adopted agroforestry is their lack of access to capital. This is not however the case in the Sierra Madre’s area as the environment and development initiatives that tried to promote the farming system were ‘highly oiled’ with funding; in fact supplied with ‘overwhelming truckload of seedlings’. Lack of flexibility on the part of a bureaucratic INGO and a sense of foresight being wanting on the implementing actors’ side are among the reasons...
behind the failure. Limited technical staff has been cited as directly impacting the operation. That however is something that could have been addressed or at least mitigated, with proper coordination. Many government agencies share common goals and roles such as the earlier mentioned Department of Agriculture (DA), the DENR, and the local governments. These agencies among others also undertake special extension programmes; they even have extension officers assigned in the area covered by the project but often don’t have sufficient funds to fully implement their plans. Linking and collaborating with them can build synergy, promoting knowledge exchange and cost sharing.

An important consideration when we analyze coordination is the role that discourses play. A discourse has a bearing on why some people prioritize exploitation of natural resources while others prefer to preserve, or perhaps use them in a sustainable way. Consider for example the actors within PAMP coming from one sector alone (i.e. local government); we can already see how difference in discourses might blur the focal points while shaping priorities on the ground. In Isabela province where the protected area is located, it is common to hear how mayors associate development with roads and other infrastructure projects, while village heads perceive development as more about providing goods and services to the villagers whose idea of development in turn is often linked to livelihood opportunities available in their immediate environment. These are competing interests, and sometimes conflicting, but as one endeavours to analyze their underlying values, they are really about addressing human needs in various ways, and these may not necessarily be in conflict with the idea of forest protection for sustainability. When decision-makers in a multi-stakeholder body deliberate then, one important feature is to facilitate the convergence of interests by identifying the discourses’ common grounds which may in the process allow for new discourses to emerge but are most likely aligned with the governance mechanism’s objectives for ecological and human wellbeing which then become the bases for decision and collective action.

To illustrate how discourses can facilitate convergence, let us hypothesize a group of actors discussing the utilization and management of the protected forest area. The following discourses are likely among those that will emerge: a) ‘government revenue generation’ being put forward by local officials; b) ‘forest ecosystem protection’ by
some student leaders and activists; and c) local livelihoods improvement by the upland villagers. If we proceed further in analyzing what is behind their positions, it is not difficult to conclude that there is a common element that ‘a’ and ‘c’ share, that is, development: the better utilization of factors of production, including natural resources, leading to improvement of the income and quality of life for a set of people (Gupta and Asher 1998). In other words, they aspire for human wellbeing. And this is not incompatible with forest ecosystem protection, an objective which is undoubtedly being promoted not only for the wellbeing of the forest, but more importantly for the wellbeing of the people depending on it. Moreover, it is easier to assume actors choosing the ‘development’ path to also value ‘conservation’ for the sustainability of what they are aspiring for. After all, one person may identify himself or herself with different interests and values. In the PAMB’s previous composition for example, 2 of the 9 mayors previously worked as a university lecturer in forestry, and as a municipal agricultural officer respectively. Not surprisingly, they were the ones who had a strong stand for conservation; at the same time however, they also want to uphold values geared toward the development of their constituents.

When we talk of coordination in the context of an environmental governance mechanism then, an effective strategy can be the use of discourses to identify some converging interests and values to be used as bases in coming up with ‘workable agreements’ among governing actors. In engaging discourses as stakeholders’ representatives, one does not only put forward a personal and sectoral objective, but the more representative cross-sectoral ones that align with the broader goal for ecological and human wellbeing. One of the pitfalls when donor-driven goals prevail is that communication becomes undervalued. When appreciation of the bigger scheme of things is undermined, efforts to coordinate in a more transformative fashion through the use of communication tools such as discourses are also likely lessened. A donor-recipient relationship has subtly created a kind of framing that tends to subdue a wider variety of discourses. As such, there is a need for better coordination to counteract this ensuing power relation. The Sierra Madre governance mechanism is structured in a way that it is enabling for collaboration. What it needs is the use of more transformative kind of engagement through effective communications.
3.5 Resilience

I examine the resilience of the governance mechanism of the NSMNP by its capacity to move a degraded social or ecological system back to a healthier and more sustainable state. Recall that the declaration of Northern Sierra Madre as a protected area happened when the forest ecosystem was already severely degraded as a result of decades of commercial logging exacerbated by intensified illegal logging following the decline of industrial logging operations in the 1990s. On the question whether or not the governance mechanism shows resilience in bringing back the health of the forests, the answer is clearly no. Forest conversion accelerated in 1980-1990 with ‘4.3 per cent of the total forest cover cleared during this ten year period, close to the area cleared in the previous thirty years’ (van den Top 2003, p.55). After the PA’s declaration in 1997, there has been no sign of improvement. The forests are still heavily logged, illegally this time. Some researchers estimate that between 20,000 and 35,000 cu. m wood are extracted from the park every year through illegal logging. They found that four trucks loaded with premium timber pass through a village on the boundary of the NSMNP every day (van der Ploeg et al. 2011).

When asked how they perceive the status of the forests in Northern Sierra Madre, both the local dwellers and the representatives of the ‘governing actors’ strongly recognize its deteriorating state. Some villagers have linked the 1982 flooding that caused death to more than a hundred people in the area, to deforestation brought about by corporate logging operations that peaked during that year. Even in the last two decades, NSMNP has been regarded as a park ‘protected on paper’ only, with illegal logging and fishing, as well as agricultural encroachment that continue to pose a threat to the forest ecosystem goods and services. This is how an Agta leader has described the impact of forest conservation (or the absence thereof):

Since 1998, when I started my membership with the PAMB as Agta representative, I could not see the positive results in terms of halting illegal activities to protect the area. I am very familiar with the forests; I was one of those who got hired as a guide for illegal logging in the past. Based on my observation, illegal logging has in fact aggravated since PAMB was established and the forests have really continued to be damaged. With a strict and massive forest law enforcement spearheaded by the provincial government starting 2008, it has not yet stopped completely but had since then been controlled. Just very recently, I have observed that the logged areas are slowly recovering and some wild animals are coming back; they are showing...
up now, unlike those times when they were regularly threatened by the roaring sound of the logging machines.

Such account is consistent with how some have described the recent developments in the area. They aver that a coalition of civil society organizations and the reform-oriented governor had remarkable success in controlling illegal logging activities, concluding that improvement on the rule of law is then a prerequisite for forest conservation and poverty alleviation (van der Ploeg et al. 2011). While this seemed to be a positive indication of a possible improvement of the governance mechanism’s resilience, it was however short lived. As I have indicated earlier, the described lady governor lost in the country’s elections in 2010. Since I was doing my fieldwork during the campaign period, I have personally observed how the governor’s efforts to protect Sierra Madre were taken either negatively or positively by the affected local communities. Given the nature and practice of representative democracy in the country, I am sceptical if her initiatives will be sustained or supported by the new administration. With some recent news reporting that illegal logging has again increased, the present and future scenario of the forests in the area at the moment remains gloomy.

The absence of the governance mechanism’s resilience is also reflected in its lack of capacity to bring the degraded social system back to its healthier state. One of the objectives in the declaration of the protected area is rural development. We recall that the closure of several logging companies had resulted to serious income crisis among many former company workers. The rise of illegal logging that followed did not only destroy the ecosystems and distort markets (van der Ploeg et al. 2011), it also eroded the cultural traditions and identity among indigenous peoples. It has been more than decade since the establishment of a governance mechanism in NSMNP. Not only is the destruction of the forests left unabated; the degraded state of its social system has also been left unaddressed.

Several policy interventions have been tried and tested to bring the Sierra Madre’s social-ecological systems back to their healthier and more sustainable state. Livelihood alternative projects were the priority for some governing actors; while for others, it is improving the forest law enforcement in the area. Despite huge funding however, they failed in meeting their objectives; and for those that showed initial
indications of success, they were not able to sustain their efforts. Lessons from the two priorities point out that neither one is sufficient. An integrated approach calls for balancing of both livelihood and law enforcement objectives, rather than prioritizing one while sidelining the other. The Sierra Madre case also underscores the importance of communicative coordination in enabling a governance mechanism’s resilience. Livelihood project implementation in the past was donor-driven. Being target-rather than process-oriented, it failed to give enough attention to the broader socio-political dynamics where it operates, undermining collaboration and integration at the local level. The sustainability of the initiatives on forest law enforcement on the other hand was constrained by local politics. Moreover, the divided views among the locals on the acceptability of the strategy seem to tell us that a consequential tension of interests and values is perhaps too big to be disregarded.

The following section describes the outcomes of the forest conservation governance mechanism in relation to how the values of distributive justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability are either, promoted, maintained, or undermined by the employed mechanism.

4. Forest Governance Core Values

4.1 Distributive Justice

There seems to be a growing recognition on the myriad of linkages between natural resource governance and justice. The Philippines NIPAS Act enshrines the protection of social justice and rightly so (La Vina et al. 2010). But implementation of conservation policies often tells us how issues of equity involving the local communities are easily undermined. In the case of the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, let us examine how the marginalized local peoples such as the Agta and other forest dependent villagers, fare in the course of the protected area management and conservation.
The state’s crucial role in the utilization of the Philippines forests can be traced back to its colonial and post-colonial past. Unjust experiences in the country’s uplands stem from earlier hegemonic government policies. In Sierra Madre just like in many other areas, the indigenous peoples have been coping with the intrusion into their ancestral domains by corporate logging operators, lowlanders, and other migrants lured by the rich natural resources. Corporate logging was the most important industry in Sierra Madre in the 1980s. With vast areas being deforested since then, the indigenous peoples’ livelihoods have been adversely affected; their rattan harvest and other food crops were drastically reduced, forcing some of them to cut trees for charcoal production or even get involved in carabao logging operations. The poor living conditions of forest peoples increase their vulnerability for exploitation by various interest groups outside the community. And with the closure of the timber companies, illegal logging participated in by a number of locals became more rampant and considered as one of the most profitable income generating activities in the forest frontier. How these situations were dealt with by the governance mechanism upon the declaration of the Northern Sierra Madre as a protected area has been viewed differently.

The conservation initiative has had negative consequences on many interest groups; a vast number of them come from forest-dependent communities of the nine ‘logging towns’ whose access and use rights to forest and forest products are now regulated, if not prohibited. While there is no debate that the Sierra Madre forests and its dwindling resources need protection, it is the manner of enforcement and dealing with the consequences of strict protection that has triggered different reactions from the locals, especially from among the 300,000 Isabelinos who depend on logging for

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23 It was the Spanish Royal Decree in 1867 that made possible the first timber licenses in the country. The American colonial policy on the other hand introduced large-scale, mechanized logging operations to the Philippines – a country that in the late 1980s would be the first in South east Asia to face the near-depletion of its forest resources had been a pioneer in the introduction of steam-engine pulleys, railways and mechanical sawmills in logging operations in the early twentieth century. In the more recent decades, the state continues to hold a monopoly on decisions regarding private access to the public domain and use of forest lands and resources, with various instruments at its disposal as the de jure owner of classified and unclassified forest lands (van den Top 2003 pp.77-78, 271).

24 Ilagan, San Mariano, Cabagan, Benito Soliven, Tumauni, San Pablo, Maconacon, Divilacan, and Palanan are the towns of Isabela that are covered partly or in full by the northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, and whose residents rely heavily on the forest to generate income. Some families from the other 26 towns of the province, and beyond also benefit economically from the resource to a certain extent. ‘Isabelinos’ refers to the residents of the province of Isabela.
livelihoods. Let us recall that it was within 2008-2010 when the law against illegal logging was strictly enforced through the provincial government-led multi-sectoral Task Force on Forest Protection.\footnote{The Task Force has confiscated lumbers, raided suspected logging warehouse, and arrested hundreds of illegal loggers. About 513,759 board feet illegally cut logs with an estimated value of 7.9 million pesos was confiscated from July to December 2008 alone (DENR 2009).} While the efforts by then provincial government have resulted to a significant decrease of active illegal loggers from 100,000 in 2004 to just hundreds of them in 2010 (ABS-CBNnews, May 8 2010), the relative success in law enforcement has meant many families have to face lost of income, and imprisonment for some individuals.

Despite the noble intention behind the campaign against illegal logging, the affected locals’ situations and the historical account of the dynamics in the area, it is deemed reasonable that they be treated not just as violators, but also as victims of the broader unjust socio-political system; as such, there are bigger violators that deserve heavier sanctions, and other practices that need to be looked into as well. In meeting conservation goal, the local communities can rightfully claim support for livelihoods given the resulting deprivation of their means for basic survival. While at first sight one can argue that violators of the law have to be penalized and that the government is just doing what is right, the complexity of the broader context requires a comprehensive and more socially acceptable approach.

To mitigate the negative impact experienced by the locals on their livelihoods, some features of the governance mechanism needs to get improved. One way is giving attention on harmonization of contrasting social policies and integration of the protected area management plan into local government plans and programs. These could be instrumental in obtaining equitable allocation of resources. Under the current situation for example, an unresolved overlapping of jurisdiction involving two national government agencies, the DENR and the NCIP, has not only meant confusion among many indigenous peoples, but has also restricted them of access involving rattan and other resources for their livelihoods. A similar complication and consequence on resource access by the Agta living on the sea-shore has resulted with the overlap between the NIPAS Act of 1992 and the Philippines Fisheries Code of 1998.
Especially given that the governance mechanism has been introduced as a decentralized approach, justice also requires that the affected communities be afforded with the opportunity to participate in decision-making and get involved in local resource management. Empirical data however reveal that their participation has mostly been tokenistic, more visible during the existence of foreign-funded projects, or when they are hired to work as labourers for conservation and development projects in the area. This weakness can be addressed by having a more comprehensive and strategic community participation in various local institutions that employ communicative coordination linking local voices and interests to policy-making at various levels and scales.

4.2 Ecosystem Protection

Questions easily arise on the impact to the northern Sierra Madre tropical rainforest’s ‘rich and diverse ecosystems spanning from coral reefs and seagrass beds to mangroves and beach forests, ultramafic forests, forests over limestone, lowland dipterocarps to montane forests; ... And their variety of endemic species of plants and animals...’ (R. A.9125) given the significant forest modifications that took place. Land use changes in the total area are attributed mainly to the corporate logging industry, including the illegal timber extractions that the governance mechanism generally failed to prevent. Compared with the previous three decades, forest conversion accelerated in 1980-1990 with ‘4.3 per cent of the total forest cover cleared during this ten year period, close to the area cleared in the previous thirty years’ (van den Top 2003 p.55).

While such was the case in the earlier time, nothing much has improved after 1990, even after the northern Sierra Madre’s declaration as part of the NIPAS in 1997. The forest in the province of Isabela that is mainly constituted by the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park has declined from 442.270 ha in 1987 to 406, 828 ha in 2002 (ESSC 2002). In the absence of forest cover data specific to the protected area, it is not difficult to conclude how the mechanism has failed to protect its forest ecosystem for a long time since the establishment of the protected area in 1997 noting the confiscation of 1.8 million board feet (or 180 truckloads) of illegally-cut logs taken from the national park in just within 2 years (2008-2010). It is estimated that 10-15
million board feet are lost annually in the previous years.\textsuperscript{27} Moreover, the impacts of illegal timber harvesting have been felt by the local communities: soil erosion, drying up streams and rivers, declining fish catch, and diminishing wildlife.\textsuperscript{28}

History in the area has shown that politicians (the supposedly law enforcers) being in cahoots with the illegal loggers is among the key factors preventing the protection of the forests ecosystem. This is clearly illustrated for example even in the recent decades when in 1990s, some deputized forest rangers could not confiscate the timbers from illegal operations when they were told by the military men involved that it was then the country’s President Estrada who ordered the hardwood for his Boracay mansion.\textsuperscript{29} In the following decade, the same issue was manifested when one of the priests involved in the campaign against illegal logging had shared how some of his team mates- policemen, are tired with local politicians intervening whenever they apprehend illegal loggers. This lack of credibility among the authorities has decreased the legitimacy of the governance mechanism which in turn damages its effectiveness as there is no strong disincentive to stop logging operations.

The absence of such disincentive has obviously undermined various incentives to protect the forest. Looking into closely the local communities whose claim for livelihood enhancement has often been presented as the sacrificed facet in natural resource conservation, my encounter with some of them says that farmers, fisher folks, or loggers - they be indigenous peoples or forest migrants, despite their

\textsuperscript{27}Based on an interview with a Task Force leader; From a parish priest respondent, it was also revealed that a church-initiated group had confiscated logs in the earlier years: 48,468 board feet(1995-1996), 23,874 board feet plus 2 truck loads (1997), 55,055 board feet plus 1 truckload (1998), and 61,241 board feet in 2009. Illegal activities are just so rampant that they become very ordinary for villagers to observe. A respondent has shared for instance that in 1992-1995, there were 24 chainsaws used in illegal operations in a single village with only 60 voters. In the coastal towns, the new parish priest of Palanan who later became a PAMB member narrates that he started his advocacy against illegal logging as well as illegal fishing in the protected area in 2007: working in a team composed of 2 priests, and 5 other volunteers including 3 Agta, and in coordination with DENR personnel at the town level, as well as with the local police, they first confiscated 3,000 board feet (2 truckloads) of logs; their second and third confiscations involved 8,000 board feet each and few chainsaws. In just one town, the volume of confiscated logs has accordingly totalled to 100,000 board feet. They have also confiscated 20 electric gears used for illegal fishing. My interview with few of those involved in the latter reveals that they were able to buy those gears from the income they gained from illegal logging.

\textsuperscript{28}Interviews with a number of Agta and other forest-dependent villagers

\textsuperscript{29}Interview with one of the deputized forest rangers back then
different relationships with the ecosystem (e.g. loggers are mainly interested in logs, but upland farmers value both trees and productive soils), they all agree on the need to protect the forests. Hoping that trees would still be available for their children and the next generations’ use, the interviewed farmers and fisher folks want the forest to be protected and that with the enforcement of a log ban, assistance in agriculture such as water source for farming should be provided. The indigenous peoples on the other hand have expressed the necessity of restoring the health of the forest ecosystem, highlighting its link with abundance of wild animals that have helped sustain their survival, and expressing their interest to get more involved as ‘authorized’ forest rangers – an idea which they believe is very viable but which they perceive to be ignored by the government for a long time. And almost all of the migrant respondents in fact favour a total log ban (especially those who recalled the flooding incident that happened in the ‘80s) as long as the implementation is not drastic, and that alternative livelihoods are provided in a transition period.

Some earlier discussions show that inadequate human and funding resources to carry out monitoring activities and other law enforcement strategies have also been stumbling blocks in addressing conservation goals. Coordination could have played a vital role in enhancing cost-efficiency, as well as building or redeeming legitimacy. The northern Sierra Madre case however indicates that for coordination to perform its functions well, it requires some shared understanding held by the elements (individuals, groups, or their representatives) being coordinated to better facilitate collective actions for forest ecosystem protection. The situation at hand which exhibits a big competition between forest conservation and economic claims proves this to be problematic given the absence of clear communication channels between stakeholders which are highly called for in a networked governance mechanism such as the multi-stakeholders PAMB whose very nature has already made accountability more challenging.

Such complication is brought about primarily by the fact that it is hard to pin down who among the governing state and non-state actors involved in co-management are representing the interest for forest conservation, or for economic development. Thus, assuming the DENR to be the forest protector, or the local governments and communities to be the advocates for income improvement is making things simplistic. Reality shows that each individual or sector carries within it differing
interests and values which are better represented by discourses in order to really tease out a more balanced perspective that leads to decisions in which all actors would likely be amenable.

4.3 Livelihood Protection

The declaration of the northern Sierra Madre as a protected area theoretically means that its forests are under a governance mechanism that involves greater restrictions on human use and habitation. Provisions of relevant laws however indicate that designation of a protected area is also concerned of the local livelihoods. Its required census and registration of protected area occupants for instance is aimed at establishing ‘basic census data, the ethnographic and tenure status of migrants and indigenous communities as well as provide a basis for planning buffer zones and alternative livelihood activities’ (Sec.3a ofDAO No.25 series of 1992).

The protected area management plan that was adopted by the Sierra Madre PAMB in 2001 has divided the park into different zones. Theoretically, the multiple-use zone is designated for sustainable development where all villages and agricultural areas are located. The strict protection zone on the other hand is basically off-limits for people with the exception of the Agta, although logging and the use of destructive fishing and hunting methods such as fishing with electricity, dynamite or pesticides, and hunting with snare traps or pig-bombs are all prohibited in this part of the park. The management plan further provides that sustainable use of natural resources is possible under an agreement with the PAMB, and for a user fee.

What have occurred during the decade since the establishment of the protected area clearly illustrates that the above plans and requirements have not really materialized. Answering the question whether or not the indigenous peoples’ livelihoods were protected by the conservation initiative is not straightforward; the complexity of the situation necessitates tracing some dynamics happening in the past described by van den Top (2003 pp. 108-111) as follows:

The Agta live in simple lean-to shelters and make a living through hunting, fishing, and gathering of rattan and other forest products. The increasingly intensive intrusions by outsiders into the Agta homeland undermined the ecological and cultural integrity of their traditional lifestyle. The products to which barter trade and economic integration exposed the Agta hastened their socio-cultural marginalization; in exchange for sugar, alcohol, and cigarettes,
the shy and unassuming Agta permitted loggers and migrants to use forests and land as they pleased. As a result of their growing participation in the market economy, agriculture has gone from a minor sideline to a cornerstone of their livelihood. Agtas now develop their own farms through slash-and-burn practices or work as farm labourers for forest migrants.

We already know how the entry of industrial logging in the area has exacerbated the exploitation of the Agta and their traditional resources. The more relevant question then is not much whether or not their livelihoods are protected as they have long been destroyed in many ways; but instead, whether or not their livelihoods are restored by the forest governance mechanism that is subsequently introduced which has the potential to revitalize their sense of stewardship of the ecosystem. Although a particular portion of the protected area has managed to preserve the relatively pristine condition of the forests and marine resources that enabled the many Agta living therein to maintain the lifestyle of their ancestors, the general answer to the question is ‘no’ their livelihoods have not been restored, nor protected. We can attribute such failure to the inability of the mechanism to halt illegal logging among others, thus, failing to protect the forest ecosystem on which the Agta’s traditional livelihoods greatly depend. Moreover, illegal logging has distorted the market price which impacts the local communities’ economic capacity.

Other local stakeholders whose livelihoods we look into are the forest migrants. For those who relied on logging, both legal and illegal, for decades already, they are among those most adversely affected in terms of income when the forest protection policy was strictly enforced, confiscating illegally cut logs that has deprived them their basic means of survival. The decrease of income among the forest migrants also had a negative impact to the income of the fisher folks and the Agta basket weavers in the coastal towns experiencing a reduced number of customers who in the past were mostly those involved in illegal logging, many of these loggers have now left the area to look for greener pasture. This resulted to a lowering of the prices of their products and has led some of them to become supportive of the proposed construction of road network that would connect the coastal towns to the commercial centres, giving them a better access to market. With an evident domino effect at play, there is

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30 Located in the east coast, roughly between the towns of Divilacan and Dinapigue, the condition of which is largely due to the Letter of Instruction earlier issued by President Marcos in 1979, declaring the area within a 45-mile radius of the town of Palanan as a wilderness area effectively banning logging and mining activities. The absence of a lateral road between these easterly forests and the population centres to the west of the Sierra Madre has accordingly helped in making the declaration considerably more effective than most other forestry policies (van den Top 2003,, p.110).
little to wonder why most respondents from the forest communities are economically worse off as a result of ‘strict conservation policy enforcement’. This is specifically manifested in the decrease of income among fishermen and rattan handicrafts makers at the coastal town of Palanan.31

Beets and colleagues contend that an evaluation of the Dutch-funded project showed that alternative livelihood development did not contribute to lessening pressure on natural resource use in the park (2002). An argument from an NGO representative leading the provincial forest protection task force presents a relevant insight on this:

The alternative livelihood introduced by many conservation and development projects will only be successful if there is a clear disincentive to continue doing the illegal action that generates the income. If you don’t stop the first means of livelihoods, then you’re not having an alternative livelihood but an additional income. Unless it is equally or more economically viable, why will the communities shift to the alternative livelihood one is offering? They will likely shift only when there is disincentive to stop the first means...which in the case of the NSMNP where illegal logging is the primary source of income among many locals, the shift will then result to reducing pressure on the forest resource use.

What has happened in northern Sierra Madre validates that a livelihood programme will not address its ecological objective when an ecosystem protection policy is not effectively enforced at the same time. A strict enforcement of such policy on the other hand without the provision of alternative livelihood to communities characterized by poverty weakens the legitimacy of the strategy, undermining sustainability of the mechanism that hopes to address both human and ecological wellbeing.

4.4 Sustainability

A mechanism has the potential to cause trade-offs between forest conservation, and livelihoods protection. It is true that the means for survival for many members of the forest-dwelling communities in this particular case is illegal and one can argue that this should not be condoned, but what seems to be the message here is that while decision-makers in a governance mechanism are to be held answerable in addressing

31 Personal interview with forest-dependent villagers
the multifaceted environmental goal, they should also respond to basic human needs and more immediate economic issues. Doing one that sacrifices the other is not a viable option, and it has repercussions to both the governed and the governing actors, to both ecological and social systems.

The State policy that supports the forest conservation strategy endorses the value of sustainability as it stipulates that "...the management, protection, sustainable development, and rehabilitation of protected areas shall be undertaken primarily to ensure the conservation of biological diversity and that the use and enjoyment of protected areas must be consistent with that principle". It uses the word 'sustainable' to mean 'not causing permanent or long-term diminishment or qualitative degradation of biological species or of other resources extracted or disturbed' (Sections 1 and 10 of DAO No.25 series of 1992).

In practice however, there is little evidence to suggest that the governance mechanism in NSMNP promotes the use and management of the forest resources for maximum long-term benefit. Instead, the mechanism employed in the area, operating within a broader governance architecture has for a long time enabled a system that is more conducive for unsustainable extractive activities as if the forest is an inexhaustible supply of woods. When unabated, the continued deforestation will easily lead to further disaster, damaging the multiple goods and services that the forest ecosystem provides.

Reliance on external funding without building the capacity of local institutions impedes sustainability of efforts, which in turn undermines resource protection. Weak law enforcement on the other hand which does not provide a strong disincentive to stop involving in illegal activities exacerbates deforestation and forest degradation. And when alternative livelihood is not provided as discussed earlier, it undermines development claim, decreasing legitimacy of the mechanism in the eyes of the economically-deprived communities which tend to go back to extractive activities, threatening the sustainability of the effort as well as of the ecosystem aimed to be protected. The governance mechanism's neglect or little attention given to livelihood along with its conservation efforts can be self-defeating. It can pressure some stakeholders to explore further options which in the long run may sacrifice ecological wellbeing and consequently human wellbeing as well. One of the highly debated
issues confronting the governing actors of NSMNP is the proposed construction of road network that passes through the protected area which would link the coastal towns to the commercial centers of the province – a welcome development for many coastal villagers whose income has been adversely affected by a conservation measure. When the road plan gets materialized, they expect to have better access to the market where they can sell their marine and non-timber forest products that are currently sold at extremely low price within the town. Politicians proposing for this project have emphasized provision of alternative livelihoods and acceleration of economic activities for the country through eco-tourism as its objectives. The conservationists’ camp has of course reacted against this proposal arguing that this can encourage poaching and will eventually be disastrous to Sierra Madre.

An examination of the NSMNP governance mechanism would show that it has not so far implemented a truly balanced approach that promotes both ecological and human wellbeing. When confronted with tradeoffs between forest protection and rural development, one seems to be always sacrificed over another, which turned out to be counter-productive in both dimensions, without advancing sustainability. A big stumbling block of sustainability in the case under consideration is its long dependence on international funding. While at the outset, the latter can easily be perceived as a ‘big support’, it has in the long run meant a deterioration of fundamental local values of self-reliance and resourcefulness. It would have served its purpose if in the course of its financial assistance is a priority given to building local institutional capacities by enhancing local policy and program support as well as budgetary allocations for collective actions. This was however undermined given the complex bureaucracy of the relevant international agencies aggravated by certain corrupt government bodies in alliance with the business sector, and the coopted members of the local communities. In addressing the NSMNP’s sustainability issues, a way of improving accountability of the governance mechanism which has been largely externally-driven, is to employ more discursive engagements downward in order to better accommodate local inputs that can balance with the more prevailing global mandates and national directives.

32 The strong proponent of the Ilagan-Divilacan road is the new Isabela Governor (and former congressman) Faustino ‘Bonjie’ Dy III. Supporters include the incumbent 2nd District Congresswoman Ana Cristina Go who also proposes the San Mariano-Palanan road (Balita, Dec. 1, 2011). These are among the politicians who allegedly come from old families who have been operating logging companies for decades (ABS-CBNnews Aug. 5, 2010).
The case of Sierra Madre demonstrates that the absence of accountability weakens the legitimacy of the mechanism displaying damaging effects on the core values being promoted for both forests and people. It also shows the interdependence between and among these values. A lesson highlighted in this case is that, ecosystem protection and livelihood protection mutually support each other, and both can lead to more sustainable ecological and social systems.

5. Concluding Remarks

The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park typifies a case of a tropical forest landscape whose poverty among its people cannot however justify prioritization of economic development over ecosystem protection. Nor does a dwindling forest resource make a strong case for forest protection to come first before attending to human basic needs for survival. Giving priority on one value, while sacrificing the other, produces tensions that hinder collective actions for both forests and people which can only be addressed with the right mix of governance institutional arrangements and processes.

The case illustrates how globally-funded grand plans for both conservation and development are easily overshadowed by the nuances at the local level, neglect of which has undermined socio-ecological systems. The governance mechanism has failed in protecting both ecosystem and livelihood aggravated by the unjust distribution of benefits and involuntary risks or burdens brought about by the absence of a working accountability feature. Distributive justice-supportive accountability demands a creative combination of robustness and flexibility in policy enforcement. The prevalence of corruption and the lack of credibility among many governing actors have however marred the process, weakening legitimacy, and rendering the initiative, ineffective and the outcome, unsustainable.

The case also shows a potential tension between legitimacy and efficiency, two features which when buttressed by accountability will enhance resilience. The Philippines which is characterized by poverty for most of its people in the forested uplands, cost-efficiency is important to make things happen on the ground. Among the pressing challenges that the governing actors encounter, include lack of funding, and the lengthy bureaucratic process in getting approval of field activities, or for fund
releases in situations when financial assistance is available either from international donors, or the national government. Coordination is enabling for cost-efficiency, and when used to enhance democratization of environmental governance at the same time, it demands creative ways to allow for pluralism of inputs from among differing and often competing stakeholders in a more cost-efficient fashion. Advancing both ecological and human wellbeing in the northern Sierra Madre case calls for both change of perspective about the problem and the solutions required, and a corresponding institutional change enabling the governance mechanism to be more multi-dimensional, deliberative, and coordinated, thus, more positioned to respond and perform for both forests and people.
CHAPTER 5
CASE STUDY 2: MT. KITANGLAD RANGE NATURAL PARK

1. Introduction

Considered as one of the richest sites of terrestrial biodiversity in the Philippines, the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park (MKRNP)\(^{33}\) is another priority protected area in the country. I selected it as my case study on the basis of its governance 'hardware' and mode. Like the earlier case, the governance mechanism in this second case is under a national government agency-hosted multi stakeholder policy and decision-making body. But unlike the first, it is dominantly 'networked' in its operations and the fieldwork revealed a contrasting set of challenges and responses relevant to ecological and human wellbeing. Networks exemplify a new mode of governance which is not dependent on hierarchical steering and is usually participated by actors beyond the state without necessarily excluding the latter. In situations characterized by a state presence, the role of the state shifts from being a central steering authority to a facilitating agent. Networks can take a form of a market-NGO, or local communities-government partnerships for example. My case involves a network that includes state and non-state actors in the context of forest conservation.

The growing attention given to the importance of pluralism and inclusiveness in environmental decision making has increased the appreciation and practice of networks as a channel of institutions influencing individual and collective actions. Networks are perceived as a vital steering mechanism in new modes of governance. Relations between actors in networks rely on 'communication, exchange of information, and on trustful and cooperative attitudes, which can provide arenas for deliberation' (Kronsell and Backstrand 2010 p.30).

This chapter offers an examination of networked governance in the field of forest conservation. It shares insights into how a multi-stakeholder partnership network such as the case under study might better promote ecological and human wellbeing, and

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\(^{33}\) I use ‘Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park’ interchangeably with MKRNP or ‘Kitanglad’ in relevant discussions of the thesis.
asks whether there are specific elements that facilitate the performance of this form of governance in addressing both ecological and development goals. On the basis of the case study, the chapter explores the challenges in networked governance and how they are addressed in practice. The chapter will begin with background information on the biophysical, social and institutional aspects of the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, before discussing the features of the Park’s governance mechanisms in terms of the criteria identified in Chapter 2 - legitimacy, accountability, efficiency, coordination, and resilience. The chapter then reviews the performance of this governance mechanism in both ecological and social terms, against the core values also identified in the earlier Chapter: distributive justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability. It concludes with a discussion of salient points arising from the case that are relevant to the goal of the thesis.

2. Ecological and Social Context

Land Cover, Forest Resources, and Biodiversity

The Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park (MKRNP) covers an area of 47,270 hectares (this includes the 16,034 ha. buffer zone); its highest peak, Dulang-dulang, is 2,938 m asl. Old growth forest covers 26,385 hectares of the protected area; open canopy forest is 12,078 hectares; agricultural land covers 3,665 hectares, while grass land and bare soil totals 5,142 hectares (DENR-PASU 2010 unpublished document). One of the remaining rainforest areas in the country, its forest cover includes the lowland residual dipretocarp forest; the montane forest and the mossy forest (Catacutan et al. 2001).

The park is located in Mindanao, surrounded by 7 municipalities and 1 city of Bukidnon province, namely: Lantapan, Impasug-ong, Sumilao, Manolo Fortich, Libona, Baungon, Talakag, and Malaybalay city. Twenty-eight barangays34 comprise its buffer zone. The mountain slopes in the area represent a wider strategic importance to Mindanao as watershed area feeding several major rivers (Cairns 1996). Considered as the ‘bloodlife of Bukidnon watersheds’, Mt. Kitanglad is the headwater source of 3 major river systems, the Pulangi, Cagayan, and Tagaloan rivers. One of the major tributaries of the Cagayan river supports a hydroelectric plant

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34‘Barangays’ are political units in the Philippines comprising a municipality or city. The term is the same as ‘villages’ in other countries.
for the electrification needs of Cagayan de Oro City and the broader province of Misamis Oriental. Other tributaries maintain an extensive irrigation for large and small-scale agriculture and domestic uses. The Cagayan-Iligan Corridor (CIC), a special economic development zone in Mindanao, is close by, with its agri-based industry seen as a threat to the ecological wellbeing of the area (Catacutan et al. 2001).

Figure 4 Map of Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park

Although a relatively small geographical area, the park is of exceptionally high conservation value, acknowledged as one of the most important biodiversity reserves in the country. It is the habitat of a number of endangered, endemic, rare, and economically important floral species that includes among others the endangered
rootless vascular plant (*Tmesipteris lanceolata*); it is also home to *Rafflesia schadenbergiana*, the second largest flower in the world. More than 58 families and 185 species of trees and other woody vegetation species have been recorded in the park (Catacutan et al. 2001). It is also endowed with a variety of rare and endemic species of fauna, providing habitat to some of the richest vertebrate fauna in the Philippines (Heany and Peterson 1992 in Carins 1996; Amoroso et al. 1996 in Catacutan et al. 2001); about 27 (or 43 percent) of the recorded 63 species of mammals in the area are endemic; thirteen (or 57 percent) of the 26 species of amphibians are also endemic. Bird life is considered as perhaps the most remarkable biodiversity feature of the park; there are 168 known species of birds, with 62 (or 37 percent) described as endemic, including the critically endangered Philippine Eagle (*Pithecophaga jefferyi*) (Canoy and Suminguit 2001), which requires 7,000 to 13,000 hectares of hunting territory to survive (Philippine Eagle Foundation, undated).

For all these reasons, the Mt. Kitanglad range is considered as an ‘extremely high urgent’ area for terrestrial biodiversity conservation; a ‘very high’ priority area for conservation of plants; and an ‘extremely high’ priority area for conservation of birds and mammals (Ong et al. 2001 in GEF 2011).

*Local Communities and Livelihood*

Peoples referring themselves as *Talaandigs, Higaonons,* and *Bukidnons* claim Mt. Kitanglad as their sacred ‘temple’ and ancestral home; these indigenous inhabitants in the area are collectively known as *Bukidnon*, a bisayan word for ‘people from the mountains’, sharing a common culture and a common language called the *Binukid*. A 1998 census report (Suminguit in Canoy and Suminguit 2001) shows that 451 households with a total of 2,512 members constitute the actual occupants in the park’s buffer zone; most of them are indigenous peoples, with immigrants from other provinces in the country comprising less than 9 percent. These forest dwellers are part of broader upland communities in the province of Bukidnon which has total population of 1,190,284 as of 2007 and aland area of 1,049,859 hectares (669,529.25 ha. of which is timberland and the remaining 380,332.75 has. is classified as alienable and disposable land with 92 percent utilized for agricultural production) (Province of Bukidnon 2011).
Historically, the Bukidnon tribes were scattered in small settlements on the hillsides, at the forest edge and usually near rivers, living a semi-nomadic lifestyle: growing sweet potatoes, upland rice, corn, cassava, taro and squash in small kaingin (swiddens); hunting wild pig, deer, monkeys, and forest rats; catching some riverine fish; and gathering edible native plants (Cole 1956, and Burton, undated, in Cairns 1996). The most recent census in the late 1990s shows that subsistence farming and hunting are the predominant means of earning a living among the indigenous peoples and other locals living at the buffer zones of the now declared protected area of Mt. Kitanglad range.

Farms in the Mt. Kitanglad area are an average of only 1.6 hectares; farmers plant root crops (24 percent), corn (21 percent), coffee (16 percent), fruit trees (12 percent), spices (8 percent), sugarcane (6 percent), and abaca (4 percent), with just less than one percent of them growing rice, tobacco and coconut. More than 80 percent of these farmers complement their planting activities with livestock-raising, while nearly 40 percent of them engage in fishing in nearby creeks or rivers with very little contribution to their daily subsistence. Off-farm economic activities such as gathering of rattan poles, basket weaving, abaca production, processing of raw timber, and hunting of wild animals also provide sources of additional income, as well as for household consumption in the case of animal hunting. The most recent 1999 survey of 68 occupants in buffer-zone areas revealed a monthly household average income of Php1,205.40, ranging Php12,340 - Php405 (Canoy and Sumiguit 2001 pp.66-67).

Nearly all of the park’s agricultural land is situated within the buffer zone, planted with introduced high value crops (DENR-PASU 2010 unpublished document). Rising population has increased the entry and encroachment of migrants into the buffer zones, increasing agricultural activities and converting portions of the forested areas into farmlands, especially with high-value crop production becoming a viable source of income (Canoy and Sumiguit 2001). Aside from the biological and economic importance of the Mt. Kitanglad range, it is the ancestral territory of indigenous peoples particularly the Talaandig, Higaonon and Bukidnon tribes. These ethnic groups share common historical and cultural ties and all regard Mt. Kitanglad as the wellspring of their traditions (MKRNP Management Plan).
Cairns' (1996) historical accounts of the area describe how, after World War II, Mindanao - known as the 'Land of Promise' - attracted settlers from the crowded Luzon and the Visayas who came mostly to claim a piece of land as their own, or find employment in the booming logging industry. This was also an era of uncontrolled logging in Bukidnon, resulting in rampant destruction of its upland forests; this was in part because migrants followed the logging roads and cleared kaingin or slash and burn farming from the logged-over areas. Aside from the spontaneous migration, the then Governor of Bukidnon initiated a campaign advertising the province's vast unclaimed frontiers to prospective migrants, with the intention of accelerating the province's economic development. The indigenous peoples then 'found themselves increasingly marginalized in a complex and competitive society — naive to the ways of commerce; ignorant to the lowland law; parochial and politically unorganized; and lacking formal education or financial resources' (Cairns 1996). With unscrupulous traders (including Chinese merchants) exploiting the natives' vulnerability, the Bukidnon were easily alienated from their ancestors land for a few tins of sardines, few bottles of 'Fighter' wine, or cancellation of small debts; with the selling of their residential lots and farms near the barrio, they then retreated closer to the forest periphery (Cairns 1996).

The consolidation of large land-holdings on the plateau by wealthy investors associated with the proliferation of cattle ranches (1990-1915), pineapple (since 1928 to date), and more recently sugarcane plantations (from 1975) in the province has progressively displaced most migrant farmers, pushing them into the lower foot slopes and, in turn, forcing the indigenous peoples to the upper slopes of the watershed. The rich biodiversity of the area that is now the Park was threatened by rapid deforestation on its lower slopes, stimulated by industrial logging (especially during the 1967-1983 period when rough roads were built in the foot slopes for the extraction of hardwoods), wildfires during the El Nino-induced droughts in 1973-1983 (eg, the 1983 fire burned 6,447 hectares of forests), vegetable gardening, swiddening and rising population densities from both high in-migration and fertility rates (CPPAP1997). The abundant supply of forest products that are within reach by the occupants along the buffer zone barangays has also made it more difficult to control illegal activities in the past. They also observe how the unstable law and order
situation before the establishment of the protected area has contributed to its deforestation, noting that the insurgents and smugglers have become partners in illegal logging operations, with the former protecting the smugglers in return for a share of the income they generated.\textsuperscript{35}

Results of a 1995 workshop examining the condition of four protected areas in the Philippines identified the following issues that affect the ecological health of Mt. Kitanglad range: forest loss and degradation, wildlife habitat destruction and species decline, soil fertility depletion, and downstream siltation (Garrity et al. 1995). The human-induced activities especially with the prospect of large communities living in poverty in the buffer zone, and the agri-industrial growth and development nearby, remains a significant threat to the integrity of the biodiversity-rich Mt. Kitanglad Range (Cairns 1996; Catacutan et al. 2001).

Forest Resource Use Regulation and Conservation Governance Framework

Considering the ecological, economic, social, and cultural value attached to Mt. Kitanglad range, a resolution (No.32) endorsing its proclamation as a national park was passed in 1989 by the municipal council of Sumilao. Subsequently, Presidential Proclamation No.677 was signed by Pres. Aquino in 1990 declaring Mt. Kitanglad Range as a national park. In 1992, when Republic Act No.7586, otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Law was enacted, MKRNP was made one of its initial components. What followed was the organizing of the multisectoral Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) to operationalize the NIPAS law in the area. The PAMB had since then managed the park. In 1996, President Ramos issued Presidential Proclamation No.896 which elevated MKRNP to a state-proclaimed protected area under the Natural Park category. Republic Act 8978 (the Mt. Kitanglad Act of 2000) is a specific law establishing Mt. Kitanglad range as a permanent protected area, following the completion of its management plan (Canoy and Suminguit 2001).

The park is one of the country’s 10 protected areas covered under the World Bank’s Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project (CPPAP). Initiated in 1994, the project has a twin goal of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Coordinating the project in MKRNP from

\textsuperscript{35} Personal interview with DENR-PASu personnel
1996 to 2002 is a selected local host-NGO which is the Kitanglad Integrated NGOs, Inc. (KIN) in collaboration with the DENR-Park Superintendent’s Office (PASu) which serves as the secretariat and technical arm of Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) – the local authority and the highest governing body of the park. With representatives from the Local Government Units, the National Government Agencies, Non-Government Organizations, and the Indigenous Peoples, the PAMB is composed of more than 60 members en banc (representing the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-DENR; the Department of Agriculture-DA; the Local Government Units-LGUs through the vice governor, 7 municipal/city mayors, and 28 barangay captains, plus the Provincial Planning and Development Office, and the Office of the Governor as ex-officio members; 14 Tribal Groups, 1 from the Council of Elders; 3 NGOs, 1 Peoples Organization; the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples; the media; and the private industry); 19 members constitute the Executive Committee; and there are 12 operational committees (DENR-PASu of MKRNP, undated).

The implementation of the CPPAP has greatly shaped the institutional, community, and cultural developments in MKRNP. The PAMB has been regarded as ‘one of the most cohesive and functional policy-making body among the terrestrial protected areas all over the country’ (DENR 2006; see also La Vina et al. 2010). In this context, it is instructive to ask what are key strategies and processes employed by the key governing actors in the area which facilitated their sustained efforts beyond the life cycle of the externally-funded project.

**Actors Within and Beyond the State: Building on Local Knowledge and Institutions**

Like other priority protected areas in the Philippines, the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park has received special attention and support from various local and global agencies. A striking feature among its key governing actors has been the way they recognize the value of traditional knowledge systems, which has greatly empowered the indigenous peoples in the area. Recall that the authority of these forest-dwelling people as stewards of the land had been gravely eroded with the country’s prevailing policies and practices during its colonial and post-colonial past.

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36 This is consistent to the feedbacks I got from my personal interviews with the Protected Area Superintendents in the other two cases.
Engaged by the PAMB in conservation and development programs, the Bukidnon tribes have accordingly exercised strong and critical leadership in pursuing collective actions using their expertise. Some of the many initiatives they have taken were listed by Canoy and Suminguit (2001): revival and strengthening of their traditional structures, such as the Council of Elders (CoE) who decides on matters affecting the future development of MKRNP as their ancestral domain; activation of the community-based park protection group though the paggalad, or tribal guards, who take the lead in enforcing customary laws inside their ancestral domain; proclamation of ownership over the biological and genetic resources of Mt. Kitanglad to protect it from biopiracy; successful assistance in controlling forest fires during the El Nino phenomenon of 1998; undertaking of site restoration projects through the establishment of community tree nurseries and managing of model farms for assisted natural regeneration and lauan species domestication; and developing of strong linkages with other territorial leaders to enhance their social relationships, as well as adherence to sayuda ha batasan, the tribal system of consensus-building on matters affecting the territory. Their representation in PAMB has not only resulted to a recognition of their cultural norms, but has led into a more meaningful integration of their culture and capacities in the park management approaches.

The significance of the role that local governments play in natural resource management and conservation is also showcased in MKRNP. As noted above, the idea of making Mt. Kitanglad as a national park was first endorsed by a Municipal Council in 1989. The PAMB began its preliminary discussions in 1993; meeting venue shifted from one municipality to another, with concerned local chief executives shouldering the expenses. When the 7 year World Bank-funded project ended in 2002, its activities continued with a sustained policy and funding support for activities associated to the management and protection of MKRNP from the local government units involved. The DENR records show, for example, the following budgetary allocations for the year 2008: PhP1.0 M from the provincial government of Bukidnon; PhP0.7 M from the provincial legislative council (Vice Governor’s office); PhP0.2M from the provincial legislative council (Environment Committee); PhP0.2M from the municipal government of Lantapan; PhP0.1M from the municipal government of Sumilao; PhP0.1M from the municipal government of Libona; PhP0.1M from the municipal government of Baungon;PhP0.3M from the municipal
government of Talakag; PhP0.15M from the municipal government of Manolo Fortich; PhP0.2 M from the municipal government of Impasug-ong; and PhP1.5M from the city government of Sumilao. This kind of support has already been practiced for a couple of years; for instance, the province has been providing the PhP1M as its annual budget for MKRNP since year 2000.

Other than the World Bank-funded CPPAP, there have been many other initiatives associated with management of the Mt. Kitanglad protected area although, as one would expect, these other initiatives are not as highly funded; these are mostly research and/or extension projects carried out by relevant national government agencies, NGOs, universities, or international research, and development organizations.

Among the many actors is the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) which has been active in Mindanao, and operating in the province of Bukidnon, particularly in the Mt. Kitanglad area since in the early1990s. From its involvement in the earlier USAID-funded research consortia, the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management- Collaborative Research Support Program for Southeast Asia, to the more recent ACIAR and AusAID -funded Philippines-Australia Landcare Projects, ICRAF has been extensively engaged in research and capacity-building activities in partnership with local governments. Among others, it assisted the 1996 local government-led Natural Resource Management and Development Planning (NRMDP) process adopted by several municipalities involved in MKRNP; employing a ‘Preventive Systems Approach’ (PSA), it advocates a principle ‘...where a single action affects the others and therefore, the layers of command and responsibility of the management entities involved have to be reconciled and connected in order to gain a collaborative advantage for protected area management’; integrating Landcare into the NRMDP as a major strategy for a grassroots-oriented technology dissemination program, the combined gains of local government-led NRM planning and farmer-led initiatives accordingly form the basis for a holistic NRM system that supports protected area and ancestral domain management (Catacutan et al. 2001).

The PAMB’s approaches are anchored in local experiences, knowledge, and institutions, while linking with other service providers have lead to some good
results. In addressing its conservation goals for instance, there has been a reported
dramatic decline in the number of incidence of violations in the buffer zone of
MKNRP reducing the number of trees cut from 1997 to 2005; cases filed against the
perpetrators have also been significantly reduced from 78 in 1998 to only 2 cases in
2002 to date. It is believed that the creation of the indigenous peoples' – led
Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGV) which started with just 80 members in 1997 and
eventually grew to hundreds has been instrumental in reducing forest-destructive
illegal activities.

In the following section, I examine more closely the governance mechanism that is
employed in Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park by assessing its key structures and
processes against the criteria identified in Chapter 2.

3 Forest Governance Criteria

3.1 Legitimacy

The emphasis in this section is on input legitimacy as discussed in Chapter 2. I will
then look into its key elements such as representation, inclusiveness, and
participation.

Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act, and its 1997 Indigenous People’s Right Act
(IPRA) are key enabling policies that have created a space for innovations in
employing participatory approaches which the governance mechanism of the Mt.
Kitanglad Range Natural Park has aptly taken advantage of. While these pieces of
legislation also apply to the other two cases, the governing actors in the Kitanglad
case have more proactively made use of them which further legitimizes their
initiatives in building and synergizing local institutions for collective actions. Certain
conflicting provisions in the NIPAS Act and the IPRA have caused tensions between
relevant agencies in the Sierra Madre case. However in the Kitanglad case, they used
these conflicts as entry points for deliberation among affected governing actors. From
the composition of the PAMB to its many initiatives on the ground, a high level of
representation and a relatively good quality of participation are evident. Although the
PAMB is attached to a national government agency, with the DENR’s office of the
Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) serving as the technical arm and secretariat, the important role of the local governments in the management of natural resources as mandated by law is very evident; the inclusive nature of the governing body is also manifested in the investment it puts on participatory procedures such as deliberations in PAMB meetings, as well as consultations, and dialogues in various planning and decision-making processes.

While there is already a substantial representation by the civil society groups in the governing Board, consideration of relevant inputs reaches beyond the official members; for example, agri-business firms and other stakeholders operating in the area are also included in some of its meetings and other activities. Another very important feature it exhibits, which is uncommon in many other PAMBs in the country, is the representation of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP), and the Department of Agriculture (DA) in the PAMB’s Executive Committee. Local NGOs are also important actors; the Kitanglad Integrated NGOs (KIN) Inc. served as the assisting agency coordinating the World Bank-funded CPPAP, and it has played a vital role in facilitating more meaningful participation by the the Bukidnon tribes. This has been facilitated by KIN’s long standing engaging relationship with these tribes in the area.

Since input legitimacy also relates to ‘the extent to which decisions are acceptable to participants on the basis of who makes and implements the decisions’ (Ager et al. 2003), it is important to consider further the involvement of the indigenous peoples who represent the interest group with the highest number of individuals affected by the conservation and development mechanism, constituting nearly all of the forest-dependent villagers in the area. As discussed above, traditional knowledge and expertise is recognized in the governance arrangements for the park. The indigenous peoples’ intimate knowledge on matters such as ‘land use management, farming, and other natural resource utilization techniques, medicinal and edible flora and fauna, cosmology and other intricate ecology systems’ are valued and incorporated through meaningful participation in planning and decision-making processes relevant to the management of the protected area (Canoy and Suminguit 2001).

Information drawn from the indigenous peoples and their traditional approaches to different aspects of natural resource utilization and management are being integrated
into broader governance structures that involve other actors in the MKRNP. This has helped to increase the input legitimacy of governance from the perspective of the indigenous peoples, encouraging them to sustain their active participation in environmental governance. The organizing of the Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGV), and their success in enforcing regulations against illegal forest activities for instance, are contributing factors to input and output legitimacy respectively. This was a consequence of the assisting-NGO (KIN), which was already working closely with the indigenous peoples, informing the PAMB about a traditional system in which there are members of the tribe already designated as *alimaong* or guards whose duty was to protect the tribe; instead of reinventing the wheel, the PAMB adopted this system, with the tribal guards deputized by the DENR adding forest protection to their duties as protectors of their communities.

The passing of culture-sensitive policies, resolution of disputes involving resource use and customary practices, and attention to other relevant issues have also been facilitated with the participation of the Council of Elders and the tribal leaders in PAMB. Recently, Bae Inatlawan, a woman tribal leader who sits in the Board, gained the Board’s endorsement of the Daraghuyan tribal community’s ancestral domain claim for 4,200 hectares inside the protected area; she commented: ‘We are recognized by PAMB, so we recognize the PAMB too’. 37

The values promoted in the governance mechanism’s strategies also match with the interests of many actors (both those governing and those governed), and this has encouraged wider acceptance and support. 38 For the affected local government units, the sense of ownership on the part of the local government officials towards the initiatives has driven their commitment expressed through supportive policies, planning and programme integration, and budgetary allocations; their modes of support such as the participatory NRMD planning in turn further enhance the legitimacy of their authoritative actions in the eyes of their constituents.

37 Personal interview with Bae Inatlawan, fieldwork 2010.
38 Based on personal interviews with both PAMB members and forest dwellers, fieldwork 2010. This finding is also supported by relevant documents from both the DENR and the assisting NGO, KIN.
3.2 Accountability

Accountability requires the governing actors to be held accountable to the governed who are affected by their collective decisions and actions. Presenting another view of accountability that is better suited to a 'process of policy-formation carried out in a decentralized arena by actors who are almost exclusively private citizens', Baber and Bartlett (2005) cited Weber (2003 p.87) describing a 'compact of mutual, collective responsibility wherein participating individuals are accountable to everyone else'. In new modes of governance that is described to often ‘include various types of public and private actors, such as public-private partnerships where there is no coherent principal’, Kronsell and Backstrand argue that accountability becomes complex, and that reputational accountability and credibility become crucial, recognizing the vital role that publicity, the media, and public opinion play given that the hierarchical controls between principal and agents are weak (2010 p.41). Clarity about the role of various institutions in decision-making, systematic monitoring of sector operations and processes, availability of sanctions, as well as, clarity and justification of the basis for basic decisions are important dimensions of accountability.

The multiplicity of actors and institutions involved makes it more demanding for the governance mechanism to be innovative in its accountability system. The Mt. Kitanglad range is geographically under the administrative jurisdiction of the provincial and the municipal/city governments invoking the devolved national government’s functions on natural resource management. The multi-stakeholders PAMB which by law is the highest policy and governing body of the PA is however hosted by the DENR and chaired by its relevant Regional Director. With this kind of set-up, it is not difficult to imagine DENR’s potential influence in decision-making processes which may render accountability more difficult. This difficulty especially applies if most of the resources to mobilize actions on the ground will be coming mainly from the DENR. Such situation spontaneously creates a more upward accountability system which if one-sided, can silence the call to also hold the national agency responsible for their actions. Moreover, a national government-centric mode facilitates a traditional hierarchical steering that tends to accommodate interests that closely align to state priorities, undermining other interests and reasons that justify decisions. In the Kitanglad case, the role that the multiplicity of local funds plays in addressing this concern cannot be underestimated. In the case under study, the local
governments' (province and municipal/city) budgetary support to the PAMB's activities has consequently created a monitoring system. Since these funds have to be officially audited, the PAMB through its DENR secretariat is held accountable by these local government donors. The system of cost-sharing has enhanced a shared responsibility and stronger accountability which in turn provides a conducive environment for improved interactions and systematic coordination of collective actions.

Being processes-oriented is another factor that promotes accountability in the PA's governance mechanism. The high importance that the governing actors have put into 'soft projects' such as information, education, and communication (IEC) programmes, as well as capacity-building efforts both for themselves and the affected broader communities proves to be empowering. As the provincial governor has put it, 'Getting local officials to understand the importance of their roles is the key; if that disappears, one cannot expect them to support the program'. Dialogues and informal exchanges of observations and experiences facilitated by activities such as participatory planning, and cross visits among others have enhanced actors' commitment to their responsibilities; this is exhibited for example in the municipal mayors' political will to implement relevant activities and cooperate with other players in enforcing regulations to advance the MKRNP's objectives.

It can be argued that the indigenous peoples participation in cultural zoning workshops, community three-dimensional mapping as prelude to land-use assessment, planning, and land-use opportunity scanning; implementation of their tribal justice system, alternative dispute resolution, reconciliatory rituals following the precepts of customary laws; and their enforcement of the legally required free and prior informed consent (Canoy and Suminguit 2001) have all contributed in improving accountability. They have not only developed awareness and critical minds on various relevant processes and functions that can make constituents more demanding of accountability, but have directly contributed in having more systematic and sustainable monitoring mechanisms and sanctions.

The creative use of publicity in advancing accountability has also been employed by the governing actors and agencies in MKRNP. One way is through the 'Adlaw Ta Kitanglad' – a yearly three day affair in the Mt. Kitanglad area organized by the
PAMB and participated by various stakeholders of the protected area, with the indigenous peoples at the center stage. It usually involves exhibits on various aspects relevant to Mt. Kitanglad, and reporting of activities (which often includes among others the financial status relevant to the management of the PA, provided to the donors and accessible to the public). Closing the event, and as part of the annual Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGV) Congress in which volunteers are given lectures on monitoring and reporting of violations in the forest, this also serves as an opportunity for local government officials to hand out awards recognizing the KGVs’ work.

Accountability is identified as an aspect of legitimacy as it addresses the latter’s requirement of having procedures done in accountable manner (Kronsell and Backstrand 2010). Thus, employing an effective feedback mechanism facilitates information flow that potentially enhances stakeholders’ appreciation and social acceptance of a governance mechanism which in turn can contribute to output legitimacy. Legitimacy and accountability are mutually supportive. This is reflected for example in a case when the tribal leaders’ sitting in PAMB has resulted to more strategic engagements between government and indigenous peoples, in which the latter’s representation also serves as a mechanism to check if a policy runs contrary to tribal culture and traditions. The capacity to engage deepens understanding among parties involved. In the case of the tribal leaders, such access to information has also enabled them to act as direct communication channel between other governing actors, and their tribal constituents. This mode of information dissemination is important especially considering that tribal leaders are generally more listened to by their people than any other authorities. With such a dynamics however in which the tribal representatives act as intermediary between the tribes and the government, vertical accountability that holds the latter accountable may weaken. This is however compensated with an increased accountability on the part of the tribal leaders who being closer to where the action is are likely better positioned to contribute to effectiveness of initiatives.
3.3 Cost-Efficiency

While the quality of engagements in MKRNP may easily give an impression that it is costly, the overall operation of the governance mechanism can actually be regarded as cost-efficient. This is made possible by some factors, among them are the following: building on indigenous knowledge, traditional and other local institutions, and empowering those involved in taking responsibilities of their actions, thus spreading leadership roles, have avoided a likely higher level of transaction costs that could have accrued in creating and managing new systems; the 'localness' of key governing actors has facilitated a simpler bureaucracy that saves resources; flexibility, as well as coordination have also served as strategies for the cost-efficiency of the mechanism.

The DENR has always been branded as among the least supported Philippine government agencies, with a very minimal staffing level relative to the natural resources it is tasked to take charge. With the active involvement of the deputized volunteers (the KGVs) in the management of the protected area, it doesn’t have to rely on its very limited forest rangers; and because they live in the buffer zones where illegal forest activities in Mt. Kitanglad mostly happen, they require less time and financial resources in apprehending violators. The traditional justice system and other local institutions have also helped lessen the operational costs.

The assisting NGO in PAMB that coordinated the World Bank-funded project is a local, and a small organization in terms of bureaucracy. Having been working in the area for quite some time already, the staff members headed by its anthropologist Executive Director are very familiar with its socio-political dynamics. Such familiarity of the local systems, and the fact that they don’t have to deal with more complex bureaucratic requirements which are common among international and other big organizations, have facilitated a more systematic and efficient approach in their operations. The same familiarity factor has been identified by the MKRNP’s Protected Area Superintendent that has contributed to both cost-efficiency and effectiveness in their office’s programme implementations given that all of their staff members are from the province of Bukidnon where Kitanglad is located.

Like many other policy and decision-making bodies, the PAMB pays substantial attention to meetings. As the ‘lifeblood’ of an organization, meetings can at times be very time-consuming; to address this, they employ flexibility in their system, with the
more than 60 members en banc meeting only twice a year, while it is quarterly for the 19 members of the Executive Committee. Moreover, small special groups constituting 12 sub committees have also been created to respond to specific issues, with each having to meet only as the need arises.

Another strategy that they observe to have efficient meetings is the conduct of prior research as part of the preparations. A gathering of relevant data/detailed background information by the PASu or an assigned subcommittee is carried out to bring proper and comprehensive bases in decision-making during meetings, facilitating a more systematic deliberation. The PAMB takes pride that all its 300 resolutions since they started their operation in 1996 to date have all been affirmed by the DENR Secretary ‘since all of them went through very thorough deliberations’ (interview with the DENR Regional Executive Director who chairs the PAMB).

3.4 Coordination

The degree of coordination employed by PAMB in its governance mechanism is relatively high. In terms of coordination among actors within a particular collective action for instance, the collaboration involving the DENR-PASu, the indigenous peoples’ Council of Elders, the KGVs, and the police force in forest protection has significantly enhanced cost-efficiency, as well as effectiveness in trimming down of timber poaching and other illegal activities in the forest; the active involvement of the 344 deputized KGVs patrolling around the 47,270 hectares of protected area is accordingly one of the biggest factors contributing the successful protection of the Mt. Kitanglad range recognized in 2009 as an ASEAN Heritage Park.

Given that the PAMB is a collection of diverse characters, from local government executives, officials of national government agencies, and tribal leaders, to representatives of NGOs, media organization, and commercial stakeholders, their differing mandates and often competing priorities have caused tensions. In the earlier years, NGOs and government officials have at some points clashed and did not always see ‘eye-to-eye’ regarding how to run the affairs of the park. There were also conflicts among indigenous tribes. Discussions and deliberations have accordingly led to some resolutions. Disagreements eventually took a backseat as they try to find

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39 Personal interview with the DENR-10 Regional Director who chairs the MKRNP PAMB, fieldwork, 2010
solutions. According to the DENR-PA Superintendent (PASu), they agreed to first discuss matters where they could find common ground bearing in mind that they are all after of the conservation of Mt. Kitanglad, putting aside the thornier issues. They employed open communication. With the PASu heading the secretariat, serving as convenor and facilitator, ‘treating stakeholder representatives as partners, consulting them even on seemingly minor management decisions, slowly, BAMB members began to develop trust with one another, and now enjoying good camaraderie and high sense of ownership of the Board’s undertakings, sharing not just problems, but that any good news about Mt. Kitanglad makes all the different groups proud’. The kind of coordination in this situation appears to be a coordination (and engagement) of discourses, employed as a tool in harmonizing views to be supportive of collective actions.

In coordinating the decision-makers and actors tasked to protect Mt. Kitanglad – from the indigenous tribes who believe their ancestors spirits live in the mountain, to the farmers who want to preserve the forest for the next generation, to park management staff who see an intact mountain environment as their legacy, to the politicians who have realized that preserving the biodiversity-rich Mt. Kitanglad can be their contribution not only to the rest of the country, but also to the rest of the world, the mechanism’s information, education, and communications campaign along with capacity building activities are identified as important elements in strengthening the thread that binds. This is not to depict Kitanglad as an area without any presence of unscrupulous actors. There were in fact members of the governing body – both DENR personnel and local government officials who were ones ‘coddling’ the illegal loggers in the area. These actors’ perspectives eventually changed however, making them effective agents for forest conservation. When asked how it happened, answers from my respondents (representing both state and non-state actors) commonly reflect a strategy employing communicative collaborations and other discursive engagements employed by the governance mechanism. Among the activities they cited include cross visits to relevant sites, consultations, and dialogues which encourage partnerships in their undertakings. Partnership here does not necessarily imply setting of formal contract prior to engagement. More often than not, its

40 Personal interview with the MKRNP PASu, fieldwork 2010
beginning is rather informal in nature, setting a more conducive atmosphere for a
genuine cooperation to naturally develop.

A functional coordination across different collective actions is evident to some extent
in the governance mechanism employed. Several national government agencies in the
country share some common goals and roles in undertaking special extension
programs. With the aim of guiding the farmers allowed to do a limited agricultural
activities in the protected area, the DENR has collaborated with the Department of
Agriculture which in line with their mandate, are promoting conservation farming
technologies and agroforestry in the area, applying a ‘no contour farming, no
assistance’ policy as a way to incentivize the local communities in promoting an
ecosystem that is both productive and sustainable. Collaboration between these
agencies and other actors also builds synergy and promotes knowledge sharing.

Coordination has also been used as a strategy to address issues and concerns brought
about by overlapping management rights. In the earlier mentioned local government-led
natural resource management and development planning processes for example,
the ‘Preventive Systems Approach’ was implemented through ‘developing a
negotiating tool to compliment the management regimes of three different, but
equally dependent land belts under three management domains: the protected area
under DENR, the ancestral domain under the National Commission of Indigenous
Peoples, and the privately-held agricultural lands under the jurisdiction of municipal
local governments’ (Catacutan et al. 2001). The MKRNP’s PAMB has also served as
a linking tool given that these three management structures are represented.
Moreover, its DENR secretariat’s activities have been effectively coordinated with
the local governments, especially with the environment programme of the province
through the Bukidnon Environment and Resource Office (BENRO). This kind of
coordination is not only in compliance for accountability purposes, but has been
proven to be mutually beneficial to all parties especially contributing to the cost-
efficiency of DENR’s field operations and other collective initiatives.
3.5 Resilience

The resilience of the MKRNP’s governance mechanism is determined by the extent it has moved the degraded relevant human and ecological systems back to a healthier and more sustainable state. Before the PAMB was operational, the Mt. Kitanglad area was described as having unregulated and uncoordinated land use conversion; inappropriate farming systems in the buffer zone; disagreements among communities on resource use; and eroding of traditional values and knowledge. A combination of these characteristics has resulted to forest loss and degradation, wildlife habitat destruction and species decline, soil fertility depletion, and downstream siltation (Garrity et al. 1995). Its present conditions on the other hand show some major changes including, but not limited to significant decline of illegal logging that has helped restore and/or enhance the integrity of the ecosystem; wildlife habitat improvement and the Philippines eagle restoration; farmers’ adoption of agroforestry and conservation farming practices in the buffer zone barangays; recognition of indigenous knowledge systems, integration of the tribal culture in relevant local policies and frameworks; and active participation and leadership roles among indigenous peoples in some processes associated to the use and management of the protected area.

The resilience of the governance mechanism was also tested when at the earlier stage the PAMB experienced major misunderstandings among its actors because of their institutional biases. This was illustrated for instance when the chief of the indigenous peoples in the area who was then a PAMB member, filed for a unified tribal claim proposing the whole of Mt. Kitanglad as ancestral domain. While this is technically supported by the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), this has shaken the PA’s key governing body, causing significant disagreements between a very influential tribal leader and the rest of its members representing various sectors and organizations especially the DENR PA superintendent. When the ancestral claim was disapproved, the tribal leader left PAMB and became a strong critic of the institution that he once supported.41

The conflict is allegedly the reason behind why phase 2 of the World Bank-funded project did not materialize. Given that this project was being looked forward to as the

41 Personal interviews with DENR personnel, and some members of an indigenous tribe
main funding source of livelihoods support for the forest communities, its absence has undermined some opportunities. The rest of the PAMB members including other indigenous peoples' representatives however managed to tap and strengthen local institutional capacity, and rely on local financial support instead; enabling involved social systems to bounce back and continue their efforts in protecting the forest.

Some threats to the protected area remain, but the capacity of the MKRNP governance mechanism to bring the deteriorated social and ecological systems back to their healthier state signify resilience on the structures and processes employed, shaping individual and collective actions for forest ecosystem management and conservation. Contributing to the resilience of the mechanism is its enhanced legitimacy and accountability. It is noted that the MKRNP is the first protected area in the country declared through a congressional Act which was a product of social legislation; the PAMB itself was its proponent, with strong endorsement and lobbying from the local government units involved. The increased sense of responsibility among the local government officials has been a key driving force behind their fiscal and local policy support, as well as mobilization of local communities instrumental in addressing forest fires and in banning of logging activities earlier in Mt. Kitanglad than in many other PAs, facilitating the restoration of its socio-ecological system's wellbeing.

In highly networked governance such as in the MKRNP case, the combination of social roles, overlapping functions and redundancy has the potential to provide resilience for reorganization, allowing for novelty, and thereby enhance adaptive capacity. But it can also cause barriers, collision, and erosion of social capital and social memory (Folke et al. 2005). Along this line, some scholars argue that 'key individuals with strong leadership are seen to have the catalytic function in opinion shifts, enabling the emergence of 'creative teams and actor groups into a large connected community of practitioners who prepare a social-ecological system for change and transform it into a new state' (Folke et al. 2005). This feature is evident in this case when facilitation roles are assumed by the leaders in different centres of authority which make adjustments to better suit approaches as they steer various elements for an effective performance of the overall system.
The governance criteria in the aforementioned discussions are interconnected. They have the potential to clash or converge. What is prevalent in the MKRNP case is the synergy among them, rather than tensions. To better understand the role that these criteria play in addressing the governance objectives on conservation and development, the following section provides the outcomes relative to the desired values in a protected area governance mechanism.

4. Forest Governance Core Values

4.1 Distributive Justice

The forest-dependent communities are usually hit the hardest when a conservation mechanism is introduced to protect the forest ecosystem. More often, they get displaced, or their access and use of the forests become limited, in favor of the flora and fauna whose sustainability is also closely linked to the communities’ survival. In this section, I will discuss how the least advantaged peoples fare amidst governance strategies employed in relation to the State declaration of the Mt. Kitanglad Range as a protected area. I highlight the indigenous peoples as they constitute nearly all of those who inhabit the peripheries of the mountain range and rely on Kitanglad’s forests for their economic and cultural life.

Like in other cases, the establishment of the protected area could mean an intrusion of other actors to a domain that has been traditionally managed by the indigenous peoples. For the tribal groups in the area, the Mt. Kitanglad range was handed down to them by their ancestors directing them to take care of their sacred mountains and waters. As a tribal leader has put it, the forests are “our home where the spirits of our ancestors continue to live, it is our church – a place of worship, our market where we get our food, and our pharmacy where we get our medicine. The mountain has been kind to me and my people. That is why we have to protect it”.

The conservation program that was introduced is then a threat to their cultural practices and traditions. Indeed, there were conflicts that arose earlier on, largely stemming from the State’s failure to recognize ancestral domain rights (Mordeno 2008). While some tribal groups eventually gained recognition of these rights, others continue to assert them.

42 Personal interview with Bae Inatlawan, a woman tribal leader in the area, fieldwork 2010.
Amidst some tensions notwithstanding, the MKRNP governing actors have managed to perform their functions in addressing the governance mechanism’s goal for conservation and development. They have avoided in getting paralyzed by some clashes but have instead mitigated if not addressed them by strategically engaging with the indigenous peoples in more meaningful and transformative ways. Tribal elders were tapped as co-leaders and prime movers in the initiatives to protect the forests. They occupy positions at the PAMB which they have utilized as a platform to influence decisions and collective actions, ensuring that they are not being disadvantaged, but rather benefited in the process. From my interviews, it is quite clear that the indigenous peoples’ discursive participation in the governance mechanism has been instrumental in materializing their aspirations, including but not limited to the granting and recognition of some members’ ancestral domain rights.\textsuperscript{43}

The conservation has economically disadvantaged some households and individuals who previously engaged in logging and other forest activities now declared illegal in the area such as kaingin or swidden farming, and wildlife hunting. It has also resulted to a reduction of the area to till by the local communities. This consequence was especially borne by the indigenous peoples and the forest migrants who rely on vegetable gardens and practice kaingin for their livelihood. A prohibition on some income generating activities that they used to involve in has meant lesser capacity to feed their families, or reduced earnings for those who grow vegetables for commercial purposes. For those involved in logging in the past, legally or illegally, the impact has been significant (for example, from a monthly income of USD500 to USD68).\textsuperscript{44}

Yet, at present, hardly can one hear complaints or negative reactions from the indigenous peoples and other affected local communities regarding this matter. This can be attributed to the strong and massive information and education campaigns (IEC) implemented by various governing actors and agencies in trying to enhance public understanding especially among the local communities on the rationale behind

\textsuperscript{43} In my interview with a tribal leader, she proudly showed to me the certificate coming from the government officially granting their rights to an ancestral domain which is a portion inside the protected area.

\textsuperscript{44} Personal interview with a former illegal logger
the conservation policy. All the 28 barangays and a number of sitios (villages and sub-villages respectively) of each of the 7 municipalities and 1 city involved, include the MKRNP agenda during their monthly general assembly. Dialogues were constantly employed to the locals engaged in swidden farming, wildlife hunting, and basket weaving which entailed harvesting of certain trees. Penalties were gradual, from a warning and a dialogue with the concerned individuals, to strict enforcement of the regulation. And the occupants of the buffer zones were the priority recipients of alternative livelihood projects, particularly on the adoption of agroforestry farming system. It is noted that with the support of the World Bank project a couple of years back, seventy eight (78) people’s organizations (POs) living in the buffer zone barangays were accorded livelihood alternatives. When that highly-funded project finished, the local communities continued to receive support from other agencies such as the UN-FAO, or more sustainably by other service providers in the country like the Department of Agriculture which has been among those constantly collaborated with by some governing actors in the PAMB.

Linkages and collaboration among local governments, or among national government agencies that share common goals and roles, have built synergy, and promote knowledge as well as cost sharing in their respective programme implementation. While engaging with the indigenous peoples has enriched many other actors’ knowledge base, the former have also gained in the course of their participation. Recognition and respect of their culture and tradition encourage empowerment, assertion, and realization of their rights. And better access to information has improved the link between local communities with various service providers.

4.2 Ecosystem Protection

The Mt. Kitanglad range used to experience massive illegal logging and other forms of forest ecosystem destructions in the earlier decades until the late 1980s. A series of social movements have contributed to the establishment of strong legal measures to protect the area (MKRNP Management Plan 2001): a declaration of a logging moratorium covering the entire Bukidnon province in 1988 in response to massive public protests; the proclamation of the range as a national park by virtue of
municipal legislation (1989); the reclassification of the range into a natural park by virtue of a presidential proclamation (1990); the establishment of Protected Area Management following National Integrated Protected Areas System Law (1994) reinforced through a foreign assisted biodiversity conservation project covering not only MKRNP but also in nine other protected areas (1994-2001) and, the creation of a province-wide watershed and protection council mandated to fully protect the remaining forests in watershed areas and rehabilitate its denuded portions (1995). This provided an institutional landscape on which the governing actors in the MKRNP mechanism have endeavoured to perform their functions for forest ecosystem protection.

Putting pressures on Mt. Kitanglad are both anthropogenic and natural factors. High population growth (4.18 percent rate) has also affected the environment (Hartanto 2007). Considerable portions of the primary and secondary forests were destroyed by fire during the 1983 El Nino. According to the Mt. Kitanglad’s Protected Area Superintendent, protecting the mountain was a very big problem before the Kitanglad Guard Volunteers (KGV) were organized in 1997. The KGVs are the community-based protection arm of the tribal Council of Elders (CoE) and the PAMB. The 344 volunteers composed of indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers have been deputized by the DENR as Special Deputy Environment and Natural Resources Officers who have been recognized as key behind the success of the protection of Mt. Kitanglad range. In the past, so many trees were being cut down illegally, a lot of wildlife being hunted; and huge forest areas converted into farms. Soil erosion, frequent floods during the rainy season and drying up of springs and other water sources during the dry season became apparent (Catacutan et al. 2000 in Hartanto 2007). Illegal forest activities continued even after the formation of the KGVs although they slowly declined. For example, there used to be an average of 76 cases of forest violations in the park every year, but in 2010, that number has decreased to 2 cases. Slash and burn farming has also been significantly minimized.

With relatively effective forest protection and/or restoration strategies, it is argued that many natural endowments of the protected area have remained unaltered by intensive human activities. It has maintained its immense natural diversity of flora and fauna, has restored wildlife habitat, and continues to be a nesting site of the Philippine Eagle - listed by the IUCN and Birdlife International as critically
endangered species. The office of the DENR-PASu notes that starting with 1 Philippine Eagle, 3 of this species can now be found in the area this time, 15 years after they started with their forest conservation initiatives.\textsuperscript{45}

The people I have talked with have no doubt that the MKRNP mechanism has basically managed to stop and significantly prevent further activities that are destructive to the PA. When asked about their perception of the forest ecosystem’s health, 100 per cent of the 35 respondents\textsuperscript{46} from both the governing actors and the ordinary forest dwellers affirm the improvement on forest cover and biodiversity, with some of them mentioning that measures against soil erosion have also been employed with the adoption of agroforestry and other conservation farming technologies in some portions of the buffer zones and in riverbanks. This has also been validated in some documents I have reviewed.\textsuperscript{47}

The MKRNP has been declared in 2009 as an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Heritage Park - a distinction given to ‘protected areas with unique, diverse, and outstanding value’. The PA also demonstrates the unique kinship the local people appear to have with Mt. Kitanglad which is considered by the indigenous peoples as their sacred abode. While the active involvement of the KGVs has been duly recognized to have contributed significantly in the fight against illegal activities and in the overall forest protection, the primary role of the overarching governance mechanism and its strategies employed in the area in shaping conservation outcomes gets its well-deserved commendation.\textsuperscript{48} The legitimation acquired through its processes and approaches has increased the sense of ecological stewardship by relevant sectors manifested through personnel back up, as well as budgetary and policy support from local government units. Coupled with it is a strong coordination among actors within and across management domains.

The PAMB which is the designated governing body has not limited its engagements with elements within its own system. Rather, it strategically engages with other bodies of actors. Highly influential among the latter for instance is the Bukidnon

\textsuperscript{45} Personal interview with the PASu
\textsuperscript{46} These include both interviewees and participants in informal group discussions I carried out
\textsuperscript{47} Including but not limited to several issues of the Kitanglad Updates (a newsletter produced by an assisting NGO-KIN), and some DENR brochures.
\textsuperscript{48} The MKRNP’s governance has consistently received official recognitions from the DENR for its exemplary performance. I based this on the information contained in several relevant certificates and a plaque at the office of the MKRNP-PASu from the late 1990s to 2007.
Watershed and Development Council. With the Provincial Government-attached Bukidnon Environment and Natural Resource Office (BENRO) as its technical secretariat, the council is chaired by the Governor, co-chaired by the DENR Provincial Environment and Resource Officer (PENRO), with membership including all mayors of the province, heads of relevant national government agencies (NGAs), representatives of peoples organizations (POs), business, academic, research, and development organizations. It has also a Technical Advisory Committee that has been meeting regularly since 1995.

Advocating a watershed and multi-functional landscape approach, the advisory committee has robustly raised the local governments and others' awareness on the ecological services that Mt. Kitanglad provides, encouraging their increased funding support for participatory conservation initiatives. As an offshoot to this, multi-sectoral Technical Working Groups have been created at municipal levels which were responsible in facilitating the production of more localized resource management plans. Investing on peoples' capacity can be costly and time-consuming but experience in the area has shown how it empowered the communities. These are the same local actors who managed to impede an expansion of an agri-business operation at the buffer zone due to their protests. Most, if not all members of the PAMB are also members of the aforementioned council which has also been involved in activities associated with or parallel to what the PAMB has been doing. When asked whether any overlapping function has caused confusions, the involved actors have argued that clear definition of roles and emphasis on the importance of deliberation have avoided tensions and instead developed more synergies for collective actions. These two centres of governance authority in the area employ communicative coordination as they reach out with other actors in other levels or dimensions such as the research community. Having identified relevant research findings for instance as not being utilized, they address that gap by facilitating the presentation of these findings and lobbying for their integration to local policies and practice which in turn have enhanced social acceptability and support for conservation efforts.

4.3 Livelihood Protection

A forest conservation mechanism often limits rural people's access to forest products for subsistence use which can have obvious livelihood implications. Protectionist
tendencies can have different impacts on different interest groups, with the more marginalized stakeholders often have to bear the relatively bigger burdens especially when regulations adversely affect income generating activities. When livelihoods among local forest users are not promoted or at least protected by the policy, this can be a stumbling block against a sustainable ecosystem protection as it undermines a basic incentive of the poor to get involved and support a collective decision. It is when communities derive tangible benefits from their efforts that likelihood of success of a community-based forest management and conservation initiative increases.

With a relatively successful forest protection in the MKRNP case, it has protected in a way the resource base in which many members of the local communities depend for their livelihoods and cultural survival. For those whose means of income are however adversely affected by the conservation mechanism, their enthusiasm to participate in environmental decisions and actions may easily wane unless alternatives are provided. In the case at hand, its governing actors have given attention to this issue, exploring options in meeting this need.

In mid 1999 for example, the PAMB has approved the second and third batches of livelihood project proposals funded through World Bank CPPAP; the approved livelihood activities which then aim to benefit 762 households around Mt. Kitanglad’s buffer zone communities, involve agroforestry, abaca production, bamboo farming, and coffee production (Kitanglad Update, June 1999). Complementing this World Bank support which was facilitated by KIN - (a local NGO), the local governments, national agencies, universities, research or development organizations were also tapped for infrastructure, capacity-building, technical assistance, or other available support services.

The DENR in particular coordinates with the Department of Agriculture to support livelihood of the forest dependent communities. The latter’s advocacy for ‘contour farming’ for instance, is intended for both ecological and livelihood protection. It tries spreading to the communities that such a farming strategy addresses both conservation and production; it prevents topsoil erosion, thus preserving the richness of the soil and so allowing farms to maintain their productivity – and therefore takes
away the need for farmers to move from one area to another, as well as yet another reason for making a clearing in the middle of the forest.

A ‘tenured migrant’ Benjamin Maputi and the Imbayao Multi-Purpose Cooperative who own the Mt. Kitanglad Agri-Ecological Techno-Demo Center (MKAETDC) for example, are among the other non-state local actors which the government links with which also plays a key role in the effort to support livelihood. Regular seminars for farmers, teaching them about sustainable upland farming, diversified agriculture, agroforestry, goat-and sheep-raising, and abaca production are among the activities in the Centre. The International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) has also been an active partner of the DA among others in the area in promoting agroforestry through the landcare programme.

Following the DA’s ‘no contour, no assistance’ policy as a way to increase incentive for farming technology adoption, the office of the Protected Area Superintendent (PASu) keeps a list of farmers adopting conservation farming technologies at the buffer zone, and gives their names to other government agencies such as the DA, DENR, and the Department of Science and Technology, recommended as priority recipients of different assistance programmes from these agencies. Support ranges from free seedlings, to technical assistance, free seminars and trainings for the farmers. While the biggest chunk of the park’s annual budget goes to the KGV forest protection programme, the rest of it is primarily directed to enhance economic opportunities for the farming communities at Mt. Kitanglad’s buffer zone. With limited funding, the governing actors have to find creative ways to support activities for livelihood given how a forest ecosystem protection is intertwined with it.

The MKRNP is not characterized by the absence of challenges adversely affecting livelihoods. As already indicated in an earlier section however, this has not become a big issue. Not because the locals have not been affected; they in fact share how the mechanism has reduced their area for cultivation or even decreased their income at the initial stage. But what one can easily recognize from their stories’ message is that things have been very well explained to them that they commonly express their appreciation about the conservation efforts. When forest-dependent people were asked how they perceive about their household economic situations before and after the declaration of the Mt. Kitanglad range as a protected area, the general response is
that they have either maintained or improved their means of livelihood given that the conservation mechanism has driven them to work harder, look for alternative livelihoods and be more creative in finding income-generating options.

The success of the MKRNP governance mechanism in the aspect of livelihood protection is not much on the livelihood opportunities it has given away for the local communities, but rather more on the positive impact of the time and effort it has invested for extensive social preparations which highlight its massive information, education, and communication campaigns, and trainings. There is hardly any dole out employed; the provision of livelihood assistance was indeed process-oriented, emphasizing the role of incentives and responsibilities in participation.

Facilitating the mechanism’s capacity to effectively address issues and concerns on local livelihoods is its meaningful engagements among actors at various levels, enhanced by the indigenous peoples’ influence in decision-making processes. Its collaborative undertakings, and more community-based approaches in planning and implementation of livelihood projects, although time consuming at first thought, have proven to be more cost-effective, and more sustainable with its enhanced procedural legitimacy.

4.4 Sustainability

The balanced attention that the MKRNP’s governance mechanism has given to both protection of the forests and the wellbeing of the people who depend on them for livelihood presents a good prospect in terms of ensuring the use and management of the forest resources for maximum long-term benefit. We saw in the earlier sections that the governing actors have succeeded in bringing the ecological and social systems back to their healthier state. With an increased forest cover, protected watershed, and improved biodiversity in the area, there is a strong likelihood that the resources can continue to benefit future generations. This characteristic of the Kitanglad case can be largely attributed to the governance mechanism’s recognition of the culture, basic needs and rights of the indigenous and other forest-dependent peoples who have been made as real partners and co-leaders in its conservation and development initiatives.
Engaging the locals such as the Kitanglad Guard Volunteers, as forest protectors, has been among those instrumental in abating logging and other illegal forest activities in the protected area. Their commitment is a big support for the ecosystems’ sustainability. There has been an issue raised on their material needs which have not been fully addressed. However, as long as the governing actors continue to employ open communication and discursive processes such as deliberation, this problem would likely get resolved in due course. Considering the general poverty level of the volunteers, the resolution of an issue such as this is particularly important in order to incentivize them to continue their collective actions for forest protection. Recall that the volunteers have been helping a lot in enforcing relevant laws and have been active members of the protected area’s biodiversity and monitoring system.

In the Kitanglad case, the capacity of its governance mechanism to effectively protect the forest ecosystem in order to sustainably gain from it is strengthened by its governance approaches. As mentioned earlier, among them is building on local knowledge, structures, and processes. Even with the absence of foreign-funded projects, the governing Board has been self-sufficient, with both enabling policy and funding support provided by the involved local governments which have integrated activities related to Mt. Kitanglad into their land-use plans, ensuring that budgetary allocations will be made for park management operations.

We also recall that the indigenous peoples in general play a very crucial role towards sustainability. Their affinity and own views of nature primarily motivate them to take care of the resources, and these have been strengthened by the enabling atmosphere that the governance mechanism has provided. The higher sense of stewardship and ownership of conservation efforts for example brought about by the integration of indigenous knowledge in the mechanism’s plans and programs encourage a continuous support for collective decisions and actions. Moreover, the mechanism’s emphasis on communication fosters better understanding for a more meaningful and lasting engagements with various stakeholders, from the direct resource users, to policy makers. The change of the attitude among government actors from the traditional command and control to that which is more interactive and facilitative has created an atmosphere of trust between the state and the civil society whose members consequently became less resistant and more cooperative to a regulatory policy, looking at the latter as compatible with economic development in the long run. It can
be argued that the mechanism’s high level of legitimacy, and the quality of its coordination are vital factors shaping people’s perception as they understand better how ecosystem and livelihood protections are mutually reinforcing.

5. Concluding Remarks

The foregoing discussions highlight the strength of networked governance which under certain conditions provides an atmosphere that is enabling for more effective environmental decision-making. The case study on the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park reveals that a conservation mechanism under this mode facilitates polycentric and multi-level governance solutions. The fluidity of its nature allows for governance functions to be implemented at different levels of governance and these different levels may be functionally complementary, instead of just being nested. Thus, it is possible that a resolution of a conflict is carried out by the indigenous Council of Elders in an upland village for example, while a policy deliberation is done by some DENR representatives at their central office. All these are part of the overall governance mechanism but at each level, the actors involved have a leeway in determining the appropriate political rules to apply.

While the processes in networked governance are generally empowering, the risk involved given its inherent weak accountability element demands higher level of capacity among its actors in terms of leadership, coordination, and communication skills. This chapter has shown that several centres of authority are operating at certain points which may necessitate judgement calls on those involved. The role of the KGVs is as significant as that of the local chief executives for instance. The participatory approaches and various innovations from different sectors have enhanced the legitimacy and cost-efficiency of the mechanism which in turn contribute to sustainable ecological and human wellbeing.

The case study shows some preconditions for networked governance to perform well in the context of forest conservation: collaborative approaches among diverse and interdependent stakeholders; rich knowledge base(modern and indigenous) and skills among its governing actors and a massive information and education campaign provided by the governance mechanism to relevant people within and beyond the
protected area; the multiplicity of actors and institutions involved requires an innovative accountability system, flexible in its mode but robust in its 'substance'.

In sum, an effective networked conservation mechanism may be described as a polycentric, multi-dimensional system employing communicative coordination as it engages both local and global actors. In the case study under discussion, the increasing influence of the civil society groups has not 'reduced' the influence of the state, but has rather shifted its role from the traditional command and control to that as a facilitator – a function which seems to fit given the government mandate and its institutional 'permanence'. Networked governance is not the panacea for forest management and conservation but a useful device that must be complemented by measures to enrich the knowledge base and enhance the capacity and skills among the governing actors and other stakeholders involved.
1. Introduction

Despite the conceptual shift from ‘government’ to ‘governance’, and the emergence of networks, the State remains an influential actor in forest governance. It usually plays a decisive role given that it is instrumental in the design, implementation, and enforcement of resource regulations (see Hanna et al. 1996; Koontz 1996). A State can lead or dominate a network, and the way it shapes how the mechanism works largely depends on the approaches it employs or does not employ. The Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park is another priority protected area in the Philippines, a site I have particularly chosen for my case study because of its governance mechanism that exemplifies a state-centric mode of operations in the context of what has been formally designed as multi-stakeholder governing body. I will analyze important factors associated with it which affect governance performance and outcomes. Moreover, the strong government-business dynamics of the case illustrates how this strength has weakened some features of good environmental governance.

This chapter examines the conduct of a state-dominated forest governance mechanism against a backdrop of state and non-state interactions enriched by a vibrant civil society in constant fight against what appears to be an opportunistic capitalist. The case also underscores an ecological sustainability and socio-economic security dilemma and how the state tries to put forward its priorities and agenda.

After giving the background in the following section, a discussion of the case relative to the different governance criteria follows. I then proceed to the section on the governance mechanism’s outcomes gauged by the core values being promoted or undermined before concluding the chapter.
2. Ecological and Social Context

Land Cover, Forest Resources, and Biodiversity

The now Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park (MKNP) originally had a total land area of 24,557 hectares. It was later reduced to 24,388 has. when through the controversial RA. 9154 of 2001, the 169 hectares of which (141 has. forest cover) was established as ‘buffer zone’ set aside for geothermal exploration. Of the MKNP area, 13,610.64 has was designated as multiple use zone (2,722 has. forest cover); 9,320 has. as strict protection zone (7,922 has. forest cover); and 1,457.36 has. as recreational/ecotourism zone (959 forest cover) (PASu-DENR 2007). While 16th in the Philippines in terms of altitude, Mt. Kanlaon is the highest peak in Central Visayas at 2,435 meters above sea level (PASu-DENR MKNP Profile and Updates, 12 March 2009; Senga 2001; MKNP Management Plan 2001).

The lowland areas with an estimated size of 13,922 has. and having an altitude of 760-1,370 meters above sea level, are composed of open grassland, cultivated/agricultural areas, river system, patches of secondary growth forest and remnants of primary forest. The biodiversity assessment made last 1998 showed that this habitat exhibits high species endemism. At the upper elevation, particularly beyond 1,000 meters asl, the vegetation assumes a distinct 2-story canopy layer. The montane forest habitat on the other hand covers an estimated 8,534.45 hectares and assumes a mid montane type of forest, located in mid elevation areas at approximately 1,370 m. Asl to 1,980 m. asl. This area also contains secondary patches and primary forests. The mossy forest covers approximately about 2,030 hectares with vegetation from 1,980 m. asl to 2,340 m. Asl. manifestly of the upper montane type of forest (MKNP Management Plan 2001).

MKNP is host to about 197 identified species of flora, with 145 found in the lowland areas, 114 species in the montane forest and 29 species at higher elevation of mossy forests. Although more species are listed in the lowland areas, the montane forest has the highest plant diversity at 16.28% species per plot compared to 13.18% and 9.6% species per plot at the lowland and mossy forest, respectively. In terms of tree species, however, the lowland area has the highest number of species at 6.272% per plot. Floral endemism or level of restricted species present is relatively high; these species are found in the three habitats of the park with 80 endemic species found in
the lowland areas, 55 endemic species found in the montane forest and 15 endemic species located in the mossy forest (MKNP Management Plan 2001).

The park is also rich in terms of fauna. Fifty two (52) species of birds are found at the lowland habitat, while 13 and 7 species are hosted by the montane and mossy forest habitats respectively. The Jungle fowl, Gray Swiftlet, White browed Shortwing and Snowy browed Flycatcher are some of the birds seen in all 3 habitats. Bird endemism is said to be highest in low land areas (42.3%) relative to the montane forest (30.77%) and mossy forest (14.28%). Of the 22 endemic species listed, 3 are included in the IUCN List of Threatened Species as endangered. Those found at lowland areas include the Visayan Tarictic Hornbill, White-winged Cuckoo Shrike and the Flame-temple Babbler. The Negros Fruit Dove and the Negros Bleeding Heart are two Negros endemics classified as endangered. Six (6) species of fruit bats and 4 species of large mammals are mostly found in lowland and montane forests. The MKNP survey recorded lower species endemism in lowland habitats (40%) compared to both the montane and mossy forest habitats (66%). Mammals found in the lowland areas are not included in the IUCN Red List. However, the said list indicates that the Visayan Warty Pig found in the montane forest is critically endangered similar to the Philippine Spotted Deer found in the mossy forest habitat.

Located in the Central Philippines, the park falls within the political jurisdiction of 2 provinces, 4 cities, 2 municipalities, and 15 barangays. In particular, they are the provinces of Negros Occidental (which accounts 92% of the park’s land area) and Negros Oriental (8%) which are parts of Regions VI and VII respectively; within Negros Occidental it covers the cities of Bago, La Carlota, and San Carlos, and the municipalities of La Castellana and Murcia. Only Canlaon City is located in Negros Oriental (MKNP Management Plan 2001).

The slopes of Mt. Kanlaon are the headwater catchment of three major river systems in the Negros Occidental side namely: Bago, Nahatin and Binalbagan, which supply irrigation water to about 158, 500 hectares, approximately one fifth of the land area of the province. The Bago watershed which occupies 75% of the park’s area is the main source of water for 3 cities, and 3 municipalities in the province. In San Carlos City alone, 6 rivers have their water source from the park, while in Canlaon City, 3 river
systems are supplied by it. In the Oriental side, MKNP provides water for the Masulog and the Enyawan rivers (MKNP Management Plan 2001).

Figure 5 Map of Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park

Local Communities and Livelihood

As early as the pre-Spanish period, people have inhabited Mount Kanla-on. The indigenous peoples called Negritos or Atis have roamed the mountain particularly in the northern slopes to hunt. In the 1840s, the first wave of settlers called the “Bukidnons” (Visayan term for “mountain people”), occupied the slopes of the park to avoid paying tribute to the Spanish government. The Bukidnons were also known as Babaylanes being followers of Babaylans or native priests; they grew in population as it evolved into a millenarian movement for the independence of the island from the Spanish and later American rule. Following the collapse of the Babaylanes under the American regime, a non-Christian reservation outside the proposed boundary of the
park at San Cárlos City was established where the Bukidnons and the Atis were relocated sometime in 1932. This gave way to the proclamation of Mount Kanla-on as a national park. The Atis, given their nomadic character, often sold their landholdings to lowlanders and leave the area. The Bukidnons would do the same and moved further into the park, clearing new areas for cultivation. This attracted a new group of lowlanders to settle in the footslopes of the park. During World War II, at the height of the Japanese occupation, MKNP also served as shelter and protection to American and Filipino soldiers. Since then a steady influx of migrants settled in the area.

It is recalled that in 1855 Negros Island attracted migrants from other provinces in the Visayas who were mostly landless poor seeking jobs in the provinces’ haciendas. To acquire land, these migrants started clearing the forest and they gradually increased with the biggest influx during the 1980-1990 period. The most recent estimate of the population in Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park is 3,068 households. Out of these, the MKNP occupants who may qualify as tenured migrants reached some 2,939 households or about 14,928 individuals. The Atis or Negretos, and the Bukidnon inhabiting the park are estimated to have a population of slightly over 200 households, 93 of which comprising the Bukidnon with some 489 individual members. The indigenous peoples are mostly engaged in agriculture using slash and burn and are involved in the production of rice, corn and vegetables. Other sources of income are fishing, hunting and private employment.

The presence of settlements inside the MKNP has significantly altered the land use and classification of the parkland. While 55.24% or 11,537.48 hectares still have primary and secondary forest cover, some 29.10% or 7,148.05 hectares are already cultivated with some 291.10 hectares already titled. ‘Tenured migrants’ in the PA include the indigenous peoples and settlers who occupy 6,680 hectares of parkland covering home and farm lots which amount to 115.89 hectares and 6,564.4 hectares, respectively. The average land holding owned by an occupant within the MKNP is 2.14 hectares. A survey showed that 48.72% of the park residents own less than 1 hectare of land while 24.79% own between 1 and 2 hectares. In addition, 6.48% have holdings over 5 hectares while 11.72% own land between 2-3 hectares. The poverty incidence of communities inside park is relatively high with 94% or about 2,762
households fall under the poverty group. The monthly income capacity of the residents of MKNP has an average of PhP3,447 a month ranging from the biggest household income of PhP25,000 by 1% of the population, to the smallest PhP100 by the population’s 5%.

The main activity of the MKNP communities is farming which accounts for 95% of the households while the rest are engaged in other types of income generating activities such as seasonal workers for sugar cane plantations and game fowl breeding farms, extractive activities for minor forest products, charcoal making and micro-entrepreneurial activities like ambulant vending or peddling. The high concentration of households engaged in farming is largely due to the low social and technical skills of the occupants to secure employment or work other than farming or land based income source. In the DENR survey, corn has been claimed as the number one agricultural product from the farm (by 67.40% of the respondents), followed by bananas (32%), and then rice (22.19%). Other popular products are various types of root crops used for household consumption or sold for cash income.

*Land-use Change, Deforestation and Forest Degradation*

Logging activities were allowed by the BFD under certain conditions in MKNP specifically in the municipality of La Castellana. This opened the park to land less migrants with large tracks of logged over areas converted into agricultural use. Areas of the park with gentle rolling slopes were also cleared particularly in Canlaon and San Carlos cities and these became productive agricultural areas because the soils are fertile and free flowing water resources are available. The presence of settlers in the park intensified the economic activities within the area and with little regulation, soon reached alarming proportions. These include sedentary agriculture, traditional slash and burn agriculture and wildlife resource extraction such as hunting, orchid gathering, charcoal making, timber poaching and butterfly catching, among others. The growth of settlements consequently resulted in the formation of communities that became political units within MKNP. Presently, there are 15 barangays that enjoy territorial jurisdictions over the park with 4 having permanent barangay centers inside and the rest located at 1 kilometer or less from its boundaries.
Initiatives were made to protect and rehabilitate the degraded condition of the park in the early 1980s to the 1990s. These include programs designed to reforest the park and provide livelihood opportunities to the occupants. Several contract reforestation projects followed in partnership with private and NGO/PO contractors. However, most of these did not succeed. Efforts to relocate park occupants through law enforcement also failed. There were also attempts to prepare the development plan of MKNP, but were not implemented for lack of government support. Conditions were aggravated by low environmental consciousness among the public and local officials. The mounting insurgency conflict also compounded the problems on park management with several areas of MKNP becoming strongholds of the anti-government rebel forces of the New People’s Army (NPA).

Proclamation 721, series of 1934 was the first Proclamation for Mt. Kanlaon declaring an area of 24,557.60 has. covering the Political areas of San Carlos, Murcia, Bago, La Carlota, La Castellana, Canlaon under a ‘National Park’ Category. Let us be reminded that the concept of the national park system was introduced in the Philippines by the American colonizers in 1932; however national parks were not properly managed which aggravated later with the logging boom in the 1960s when the Bureau of Forest Development (BFD) which was then charged of managing national parks, focused on the exploitation of forest resources. In 1992, R. A. 7586 (NIPAS Law) made Mt. Kanlaon National Park as part of its components. PAMB was then later organized with support from the World Bank-Global Environment Facility (GEF) that funded the Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project (CPPAP). Subsequently, Presidential Proclamation No. 1005 of 1997 amended Proclamation 721 of 1934 and proclaimed Mt. Kanlaon National Park as Protected Area under the "Natural Park" category in consonance with the NIPAS Act. What followed was RA No. 9154, s. 2001 or the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park Law which provided for the protected area’s (PA) management and other purposes.

Like in the rest of the 10 priority protected areas in the country, the CPPAP was instrumental in organizing the MKNP’s Protected Area Management Board (PAMB). Given that the PA is geographically located within two regions, two provinces, and several cities and municipalities, it is constituted by 39 members composed of 2
DENR Regional Executive Directors (for Regions VI and VII) with the Director for Region 6 as the Board’s Chairperson; 2 Provincial Governors (for the provinces of Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental); 2 Provincial Planning and Development Officers; 6 Mayors; 15 Barangay ‘village’ Captains; 6 representatives from People’s Organizations; 2 Indigenous Peoples’ representatives; 3 NGOs; and 1 from PNOC-EDC.49

CPPAP’s implementation in the site which runs from 1995-2001 has mobilized many relevant activities on the ground. With the assistance of the designated local NGO, the Multi-Sectoral Alliance for Development (MUAD-Negros) in coordination with the PAMB, the project invokes inclusive participation especially by the local communities which facilitated the creation of local resource management structures (Senga 2001). After the exit of the World Bank project in 2001, the office of the Protected Area Superintendent (PASu-DENR) which serves as the PAMB secretariat has to deal with funding limitations which hamper most of their activities on the ground including meaningful engagements among members of the governing body in carrying out their duties. Interviews with various actors however show that the issue is beyond budgetary constraint. It has also lot to do with the actual processes and approaches employed by the mechanism, particularly by the governing actors within the state. Along this line, the development and enforcement of RA 9154 or the Mt. Kanlaon Law appears to be a very controversial contemporary environmental issue that is directly associated to the MKNP governance mechanism. Its controversy stems from a flagrant violation of the NIPAS law in the course of its implementation, and a special accommodation it accorded to a business corporation.

*Actors Within and Beyond the State: When the Government Dominates*

RA 9154 is the first natural park law in the country after the enactment of the NIPAS Law in 1992. Rather than being hailed as a landmark environmental measure, it was instead greeted by dismay, indignation, and widespread protests50. The law was enacted despite attacks and strong oppositions51. These reactions by the civil society groups were especially triggered by a provision in the legislation which converts 169

49 Personal interview by the DENR-MKNP Acting Protected Area Superintendent (PASu)
50 Based on a press release, and my personal interviews
51 See “Scrap RA 9154 Mt. Kanlaon Law”
has. of what used to be part of the strict protection area into a ‘buffer zone’ that allows it to be used for geothermal operation by the Philippines National Oil Company-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) which in 2007 was privatized and being taken over by a multi-national entity First Gen Corporation, a development that has caused more alarm and apprehension by those concerned.

In the ‘Position Paper of the save Mt. Kanlaon Coalition Opposing RA 9154 and the Intrusion of the PNOC-EDC Geothermal Project in the MKNP’ dated February 6, 2008, among the arguments was that RA 9154’s provision modifying Mt. Kanlaon’s boundary contravenes the NIPAS Law, citing Sec. 5 (a) of said Act which provides that ‘the basis for recommending for the establishment or boundary modification of an established protected area shall be warranted by a study prepared for the purpose’. In this case, the coalition members argue that no such study was ever made. Moreover, they contend that RA 9154 is bereft of social acceptability as this was not the version endorsed by the Mt. Kanlaon PAMB to Congress. The position paper avers: “What the PAMB approved was House Bill 9152 which did not modify the park’s boundary nor carry any provision on the PNOC. In fact and sadly, the PAMB in spite of its important and indispensable role in the formulation and implementation of any policy or Law for Mt. Kanlaon was driven out and made even irrelevant in the final stage of a ‘railroaded’ legislative process.”

In the words of two NGO leaders of the coalition who were used to be members of the first MKNP PAMB, “this was not the measure crafted and approved by PAMB in 1999 proposed and endorsed to Congress; the PAMB version should have been the one considered and given priority by Congress because the NIPAS Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) empower the PAMB to decide matters related to planning, peripheral protection and general administration of the area”. Expressing their resentment further, they question why the law now gives automatic membership to PNOC-EDC in the PAMB and even in its executive committee while non-government and people’s organizations, “supposedly the primary beneficiaries and stakeholders in the protected area management, are burdened with onerous requirements before they could be selected as PAMB members”.

It has been a decade of civil society’s fight against the very regulation that is put forward by the government as the most current and key legal framework for MKNP’s

52 Based on personal interviews with Edwin Balajadia and Delia Locsin; and a press release
governance. Just a couple of days after its passage into law in August of 2001, a circulated pastoral letter from a Catholic church local Diocese’s Bishop against RA 9154 and the PNOC-EDC geothermal project was followed by a protest rally participated by 10,000 people from churches, schools, environmentalist groups and other NGOs supporting the cause against the Law. This led to what they call a ‘Jericho March’ from the provincial capital city of Bacolod to an overnight camp near the PNOC-EDC facilities where the event highlighted its call to the legislators to amend then newly passed Congressional Act arguing that it will cause more harm than the benefits it boasts it will offer. The rally only subsided when then PNOC-EDC chairman issued a statement in September of the same year that they will no longer enter the buffer zone - a promise which was broken in 2007 upon the privatization of the company when it again invoked the buffer zone provision of the law pushing for the expansion of their long operations in the site adjacent to the PA (1993-2007 as PNOC-EDC and 2007-present as EDC), lobbying for its entry in the buffer zone.53

Earlier in 2007 just before the geothermal project was privatized, President Arroyo inaugurated PNOC-EDC’s 49-MW Northern Negros Geothermal Power Plant (NNGP) to signal the start of its commercial operations in the area. Its proponents have claimed that the geothermal project “is expected to provide energy to an estimated 800,000 households and help the country increase its dollar savings from displaced oil imports”.54 Having already secured its representation in the PAMB, the EDC now gets the support from many relevant local government officials who then thought that it can solve the problem of power shortage in the province. As an NGO respondent has described the EDC, “it became a star for awhile for many local government officials”55. Moreover, EDC has managed to obtain a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) from the provincial government of Negros Occidental in July 17, 2008 granting the corporation entry into the buffer zone56. Commenting on the MOA, EDC’s vice president believes that the governor ‘is stressing the point that the power situation is critical’57. Said argument was further buttressed by the Department of

53 Source: newspapers and personal interviews
54 Source: the official website of the First Gen Corp., a Lopez’s owned company that purchased the EDC, May 15, 2007 news
55 Personal interview with an NGO member
56 Source: Filipino Democrat Online, June 9, 2011
57 Source: News and personal interviews
Energy -Visayas Regional Director’s public statement arguing that “the power situation in Negros will be critical by 2009-2010, so Negrenses cannot afford to further delay production of geothermal power at the buffer zone of the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park” A newspaper has noted that earlier in 2008, then Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary himself meets with the Bishop (who was behind the issuance of the pastoral letter opposing the PNOC-EDC project which led to a big protest in 2001), in order to ‘explain the importance of the plan to tap geothermal energy at Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park buffer zone’, aware of the church’s influence to the populace.

A civil society – initiated class suit was then filed in 2008 against EDC and others, including the DENR to prevent the firm from said exploration in the ‘buffer zone’. Associated to this case, the group’s petition for a temporary restraining order to stop the EDC from cutting trees, road construction, drilling, and other civil works within the thickly forested ‘buffer zone’ was denied. Representatives of the complainants have commented that the defence lawyers have been using procedural issues to delay the case. And in the July 1, 2010 hearing, upon the motion of the counsel for the defendants, the Regional Trial Court Judge dismissed the case based on the simple reason that the complainants’ lawyer was 10 minutes late; a move condemned by the complainants arguing that the class suit involves constitutional issues and should not have been dismissed on the basis of technicality. Having the opportunity to witness that court hearing myself and interviewed key representatives of the complainants and their lawyer afterwards, I was also taken aback with the judge’s very quick decision on the defence lawyers’ motion.

In 2011, conveners of the Save Mt. Kanlaon Coalition (SMKC) and the Negros Environment Watch (NEW) who are accordingly “encouraged and inspired by the

58 ‘Negrenses’ refers to the people living in Negros region
60 The Christian Post, May 9, 2008
61 Source: THINK GEOENERGY website quoting PDInquirer, July 2, 2010
62 Both are broad alliances of environmental groups, civil society leaders, and active concerned citizens in Negros who were all behind the above mentioned class suit. The public appeal issued in 2011 cites: “forPres. Aquino to listen to the voice of the Negrenses to halt further environmental abuse and destruction of Mt. Kanlaon, and order the current Secretaries of the DENR and the DOE to immediately put a stop to the operations of the EDC in the MKNP, and initiate a comprehensive audit of the PNOC-EDC MKNP Geothermal Project; for the Governor and Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Negros Occidental to abrogate its MOA with the PNOC-EDC citing appropriate violations; for the good Representatives of Negros Occidental in Congress as well as other allies in the cause for good governance and environmental and social reforms in the House and the Senate, the local government
example and calls of the new administration President, for good governance and greater people participation in sustainable national and local development”, have managed to sustain and renew their advocacy. In a press conference, they urgently appeal to President Aquino and other officials for support to their cause.  

The foregoing discussions indicate the powerful influence of the state as it uses its position in shaping processes and perceptions. Its dominance proves to weaken some basic elements needed for a good environmental governance mechanism. Having provided the ecological and socio-political milieu of MKNP in this section, the case study has sought to explain below the different features of its governance mechanism in relation to the structures and processes employed, as well as on how these features and their interactions have shaped outcomes.

3. Forest Governance Criteria

3.1 Legitimacy

Input legitimacy as discussed earlier entails acceptance of authority by those being governed who perceive an intervention that is introduced as appropriate. It likewise considers inclusiveness, representation, and participation as important elements in decision-making processes. Examining the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park governance mechanism in relation to this feature; different things can be said at different phases of its operation; characteristics which however shape the overall extent to which

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63 The call was made during a press conference at the Bishop’s House in Bacolod City on Thursday after Energy Development Corporation (EDC) officials announced on Wednesday that the PhP8-billion NNGPP would stop operations in July for further study of the plant’s geothermal resources (Philippine Daily Inquirer – Visayas, June 12, 2011 “Aquino urged to shut down geothermal power plant”)

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decisions are acceptable to participants (Ager et al. 2003) as well as, the mechanism’s overall performance.

At first glance, the PAMB which is its key policy and governing body appears to be relatively inclusive in terms of representation of relevant sectors. Many of the actors involved in the implementation of the World Bank CPPAP shared positive notes on the mechanism’s engagements during the lifespan of the project.

During that period, appreciation by members of the tribal groups was not wanting. As one chieftain has put it, “I have observed that the government officials respect the members of the tribe; whenever there is any issue relevant to us, or any project to be implemented in our area, they call us for a meeting”. However in relation to the indigenous peoples being part of the KGB, he suggested that instead of being supervised by the municipal local government which is the current set-up, they should be supervised by the tribal council; the intention as clarified is not to create a faction but an added force for forest management and protection which is tribal designed and will still be coordinating with relevant local governments.

The governance mechanism has also managed to mobilize inclusive participation among government agencies, civil society groups, and the industry in some collective actions such as reforestation efforts in the area. There was an evident momentum among actors in getting involved during that time. It was however short-lived. The following discussions indicate some institutional and value issues affecting the change; the same factors can be seen to have caused the shift from a relatively high to a very low legitimacy of the mechanism from the perspective of many relevant actors. Input legitimacy also asks the question whether policies and norms are developed in a transparent, fair, inclusive, and accountable manner (Scharpt 1999 and 2006 in Kronsell and Backstrand 2010 p.39). In the case of the MKNP governance mechanism, most of the actors, especially actors beyond the state have painted the scenario in the last decade of the mechanism’s operation to be marred with a gross anomaly, and peoples’ oppositions. The case in point particularly refers to the manner in which the above mentioned RA 9154 or the Mt. Kanlaon Law of 2001 was developed and carried out which governing actors and many other stakeholders

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64 Interview with the Chieftain of the Iliran Tribal Council (Bukidnon Tribe), Codcod, San Carlos City
belonging to the civil society consider to have 'very serious procedural and substantive defects'.

The negative image of the mechanism that has evolved since the emergence of the Mt. Kanlaon Law issue has aggravated the situation brought about by the CPPAP exit which significantly limited its operation. The perception has diminished the interest of many relevant actors especially those belonging outside the state to support and participate in formal decision-making processes. My interviews with representatives from both government and civil society groups show that NGOs have lost enthusiasm to implement project in the protected area. Moreover, when the new PAMB was formed after the interim Board has completed its term, representation by both NGOs and people's organizations (POs) has been wanting. Only 1 NGO and 1 PO have applied for membership despite having 3 and 6 available seats respectively, and said applications have not yet been decided by the Board. Act of protest of the perceived favour granted to EDC was one of the reasons attributed by DENR representatives to NGOs' declining interest to join the management board. It is also worth noting that the NGO representatives' contention that the Mt. Kanlaon Law's provisions on 'buffer zone' and on EDC membership in the management body is not the version drafted and endorsed by then PAMB is also shared by staff of the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park's DENR-PASu saying that they too were surprised when they read the law.

With the EDC's strong connections with the government, it is evident that it uses the latter's clout in trying to improve the general masses' acceptability of its decisions and actions as it tries to convince NGOs, electric cooperatives, relevant business groups in the area, and the local governments on the gravity of the electricity shortage in Negros. While this might be true, many stakeholders' representatives I have talked with perceive this move by the EDC as a tactic, exaggerating its capacity to address the issue so that people will forget about the damage it causes to the forest ecosystem. In 2007, the company has claimed that the Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary "commended PNOC-EDC for its aggressive efforts in exploring and

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65 Source: interviews and media releases
66 Respondents include representative from Negros Forests and Ecological Foundation, as well as the MKNP PASu and the Deputy PASu who has also been serving as the MKNP PAMB operations coordinator since 1998 up to now.
67 Source: newspaper and position paper
developing geothermal resources as well as for making its projects a showcase for sustainable development”.

The discourse they have been trying to promote seems to have captured the hearts and minds of a number of the local government units (LGU), with only 1 city/municipal LGU out of 6, vocal about its opposition. Supportive of EDC’s argument, a provincial government representative at PAMB has said, “We need electricity power. What they are doing is an example of sustainable development; they are just dealing with realities... Besides, there is a law that allows them the exploration at the buffer zone”69. The company has argued that the expected 49.37-megawatt output of its geothermal power production field can further bolster the supply of electricity in the Visayas region, and that “most significantly, it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by harnessing clean and renewable geothermal energy...”70 Given such a claim when PNOC-EDC signs its carbon finance deal with the World Bank, it is not difficult to understand how government entities can easily be swayed to think more of the clean image and the justification of its actions, than otherwise.

While it is not surprising to observe politicians taking bold moves in the name of ‘development’, one of the vital factors they commonly consider in making decisions is what their constituents’ reactions are. In the case of the MKNP governance mechanism, along with the civil society’s decade of opposition is the governing actors’ resultant struggle to legitimize their decisions especially in the eyes of the locals. Gaining what appears to be its biggest backing from all the three branches of the national government, and using ‘development’ as a discourse which relates to the people’s clamour for economic improvement, the actors constituting the formal governance body seems to feel justification is at their side.

In the 2011 Appeal to the new President, the protesters concluded by calling on their friends, comrades and allies in various sectors and networks in the international, national and local levels to persevere in their “fight to return Mt. Kanlaon to the

68 Source: May 15, 2007 News from First Gen, the official website of the First Gen Corp. - a Lopez’s owned company that purchased the EDC.
69 Interview with the Head of Negros Occidental’s Provincial Environment Management Office who represents the Governor at PAMB, July 5, 2010.
70 First Gen News, May 11, 2007
people of Negros...”

Although it remains to be seen what change in the policy will transpire as a result of the civil society’s movement, as long as the tenacity of these actors in the public sphere remains, there is a reason for some amount of optimism that a reshaping of institutional arrangement can eventually happen and the legitimacy of the mechanism be regained. Whether or not the ecological and social damage by then is irreparable is however a question.

3.2 Accountability

The multi-sectoral nature of the highest policy-making body in Philippine protected areas (PAMB) is seen as an institutional innovation regarded as ‘the venue for democratic participation of all sectors with a stake in the effective management of the reserves’ (Senga 2001). Indeed, if we look back to the earlier implementation of the conservation mechanism declaring Mt. Kanlaon as a protected area, the participation of the NGOs and local communities in a governance system that is typically occupied solely by government people has created an atmosphere that is more inclusive and representative at the policy level. It has enhanced and/or spontaneously created some accountability systems in program implementations as it increases the demand for transparency of decision-making. The case of Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park exemplifies that while accountability is an enabling factor for legitimacy, some systemic forces may undermine both, rendering the overall mechanism into paralysis. Aimed to integrate plurality of inputs towards policy formulations and decision-making that better reflect public interests and values, the PAMB’s structure appears to be hospitable to the participating NGOs and local communities when these two sectors are represented. Moreover, partnerships that have emerged in the system have resulted to collective actions. Some of which have contributed in enhancing the accountability features of the mechanism. The PASu-DENR and MUAD-Negros teamwork for example has produced the Community Organizing Community Development Framework which facilitated the formulation of a monitoring and

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71 Philippine Daily Inquirer – Visayas, June 12, 2011 “Aquino urged to shut down geothermal power plant”
evaluation (M&E) tool. The framework was accordingly replicated at the other PAs in the country.\textsuperscript{72}

At the field level, the NGOs’ conduct of community acceptance meetings at barangay levels as they engage with the Kanlaon Green Brigades (KGB) - many of whom were former illegal loggers turned into forest rangers has provided a good venue to explain the roles and responsibilities in forest protection of relevant actors such as the volunteers and the DENR personnel. Activities such as this have not only increased the social acceptance of the mechanism. They have also gained more participation from the locals in their M&E system on the ground.

The nature of the Board gives an impression that regulation is no longer the dance of government alone. As a provincial government representative narrates, “We have lively discussions especially with the NGOs’ presence which leads us to deliberate a lot. They really push for the protection of the park, making reminders every now and then that Mt. Kanlaon is an area for conservation and not for exploitation. If not with the NGOs, the mentality of the PAMB members would have been very biased to development and resource exploitation. PNOC is very influential since it is being allowed by the Office of the President to circumvent the law by creating the buffer zone to accommodate what it wants. I can say proudly though that we at PAMB have set limitations to their operations, otherwise, the damage would have been very severe by now”.\textsuperscript{73} In the Save Mt. Kanlaon Coalition’s 2008 Appeal for support to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), is the coalition notes that the PNOC-EDC has been reducing the area in the buffer zone that they want to enter, from 1,437 has. to 1200, then to 169, then 50 to 28, then 12.5 in their hope to make their entry acceptable. These opposing members from the civil society have however maintained their argument that regardless of the size, their entry, as it already does, spells destruction of Mt. Kanlaon.

While at PAMB, the non-state actors have been instrumental in raising the sense of responsibility and accountability of fellow members. Issues of legitimacy that ensued have however left them with no other better option but to disengage as official part of

\textsuperscript{72} Interview with Lito Malabor, Community Organizer and PA Development Worker with MUAD-Negros involved in MKNP from 1996-2002.

\textsuperscript{73} Interview with Lea Javier, the alternate Head of the Negros Occidental Provincial Planning and Development Office, longest member of the PAMB.
the ‘empowered space’, i.e., ‘the arena where authoritative collective decisions get produced’ (Dryzek 2009 p.5), and rather use the ‘public space’\textsuperscript{74} as the ground to put forward their collective actions. There is no better option for them given the current state-centric set-up where command and control is the rule of the game. Even other actors within the state are perceived powerless to oppose any irregularity when the latter is associated to a directive that has come from those above their ranks. Contestations by the non-state actors will then likely have little impact within the empowered space, and so the better alternative is to freely express their voices through the public space. Moreover, the much favored undue accommodation of the EDC within the governing body speaks a lot about government’s priority on development objective over anything else. Having perceived themselves to be at a losing end within the mechanism, they might as well not waste their time inside if there is a more useful venue outside.

Moreover, the impact of NGOs’ and the local community groups’ non-representation in the formal decision-making structure cannot be underestimated in terms of further reducing the mechanism’s legitimacy and accountability in the perspective of the civil society. While in the public space, the non-state actors have continuously brought creativity to environmental problem-solving, capitalizing on available democratic liberties, and institutions such as free press and the church, as communication channels for their arguments and appeals that put pressure in holding the MKNP decision-makers responsible for their actions. However, their influence in decision-making itself is also determined by the extent of the democratization of the larger political and economic systems upon which both the empowered and public spaces are intertwined. In the case study at hand, the state-dominated surrounding systems appear to be both overwhelming and challenging in many ways, rendering the governance mechanism itself to be state-centric. I am not trying to contend that this is just primarily about state actors; subtle but equally or even stronger is the power of the business sector utilizing the state in its pursuit for economic gain – an interest that

\textsuperscript{74}Dryzek (2009) describes ‘public space’ as “having a diversity of viewpoints and discourses that can interact ideally without legal restriction”. A related term, ‘public sphere’ is argued to be “brought into existence whenever two or more individuals...assemble to interrogate both their own interactions and the wider relations of social and political power within which they are always and already embedded. Through this autonomous association, members of public sphere consider what they are doing, settle how they will live together, and determine... how they might collectively act” (Keane 1984 in Dryzek 1990 p.37).
government entities in the country typically share. It is the state’s hand however that holds the ‘cradle’.

In the MKNP’s management plan, it clearly acknowledges that implementation of environmentally- critical projects pose hazards to the fragile state of the PA, and the “the proposed geothermal development project of the PNOC is a classic example and touches on the legal infirmity of the presidential proclamation declaring MKNP as a protected area while allowing at the same time geothermal exploration and extraction within the PA.”75 Realities however show that awareness of both issues and appropriate strategies notwithstanding, site-level government decision-makers are under the influence of superior authorities within the bureaucracy where they belong. In the situation for instance when the Senator – Chair of the Senate Committee on the Environment has called for the deferment of the exploration and development by the EDC inside the ‘buffer zone’ pending an enquiry to be conducted on the legality of such, the EDC is still bent on entering the buffer zone despite the intervention. As an activist has argued, “The reactions of our provincial officials show that they are powerless against the EDC. Our governor yesterday said, ‘whether I sign the memorandum of agreement or not, the EDC can proceed because it already has cutting permit from the DENR’. However our governor and vice governor, welcomed the Senate Inquiry, saying this will clarify all the issues and gray areas provided in the provisions of RA 9154, the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park Law.”76

Accountability to the public space by the empowered space is required in democratic legitimacy (Dryzek 2009). In the MKNP governance mechanism characterized by a very weak accountability, it naturally follows that the system is marred by a deteriorating legitimacy. Even if the existing governing actors are basically state-dominated, its accountability has been very elusive as there is no easy way in finding the roots of the authoritative decisions given the bureaucratic hierarchy. The complexity of which creates a fertile ground for anomalies to thrive. By ‘anomalies’, I refer to the irregularities that are happening in the governance mechanism. For example, the connivance of some government officials in putting forward private interests, manifested with the Lower House’s circumventing of the NIPAS law in the

762008 Save Mt. Canlaon Coalition’s Appeal to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines
formulation of the Kanlaon Law, or an executive department’s (DENR) issuance of a permit to EDC while violating a government regulation, or even the perceived bias of the court to the DENR-EDC’s side. Given the interplay among various actors in the three branches of the government and seeming approval from their respective higher officials on what is going on, it seems easier for actors involved to be pointing fingers at each other, undermining accountability. With the latter being lax, this kind of practice would likely continue to grow.

One way to counteract what seems to be an inherent accountability weakness is a vibrant civil society expressing a plurality of values and serving as de facto ‘watchdogs’ like in the MKNP case. Their autonomy from the government makes them more credible for this function. While the framing of discourses and the resultant opinions emerging in the public space can enhance accountability on the part of relevant governing actors, their ability to shape authoritative decisions is limited. However, given the importance of the autonomy among actors in the public space in maintaining a critical engagement with the empowered space, this attribute should remain without necessarily dismissing other complementing approaches.

Given the insurmountable challenges that actors in the public space encounter when confronting and trying to influence the government as the authority-holder however, insisting on a state-centric governance mechanism for natural resource conservation is futile. Aggravating the challenges is when the broader political system within which the governance mechanism operates is corrupt. In theory, it is possible for the government to be accountable. But in practice, it can only be so if the government involved has relevant units or offices that respect and apply core democratic principles, along with having vibrant civil society. What seems to be a viable option when looking for a mechanism that is accountability-enabling, and therefore legitimacy-enhancing, is the restructuring of the mechanism, de-centering its power and spreading it to many other points at various levels and scales, with a context-tailored choice on the facilitating actor or agent – potentially a state entity, but not necessarily. And so in the MKNP context, the government stays, but it should not be the sole primary source of authoritative decision.
3.3 Cost-Efficiency

Different aspects and scales of the MKNP governance mechanism present different scenarios associated to the cost-efficiency of the decision-making processes it employs. In coming up with collective decisions that relate to field operations for example, there have been indications that some strategies have facilitated the efficiency of the mechanism. One of these is through the earlier coordination with local communities who got actively involved in its forest protection initiatives. This was particularly helpful especially given that the MKNP PASu-DENR has only afforded four forest rangers in addition to its limited field personnel in the area. The participation of around 300 members of the Kanlaon Green Brigades (KGBs) in forest law enforcement, as well as in the biodiversity monitoring system has reduced transaction costs.. The voluntary work of the locals has saved them the funding needed in hiring additional staff, as well as transportation costs and time since most of these volunteers live at the forest fringes. Moreover, their regular reporting to the governing actors has better facilitated information flow that is vital in certain bottom-up decision-making.77

Community engagements have also empowered local actors in doing other tasks such as assistance in making relevant project proposals, without the governing actors having to spend financial resources in producing them. In barangay Codcod of San Carlos City for instance, its KGB was responsible in formulating a reforestation project proposal that got approved and funded by its City government. The collaborative approach advocated by the assisting NGO (which used to be represented in the PAMB) enhanced the efficiency of the governance mechanism at the earlier phase of the establishment of the protected area. Moreover, it was also instrumental in improving its legitimacy and in realizing its forest rehabilitation activities. However, the non-state actors' involvement in the governance mechanism waned. The exit of the World Bank project has meant lesser activities on the ground. For example, with lesser support in field operations, more than 50 percent of the KGB members have now been inactive.78 With local actors such as the local governments being mobilized, this could have been addressed. This hardly happens however since the

77 Based on interviews with MKNP PASu-DENR personnel, and KGB members from barangay Masulog, La Castellana, June, 2010.
78 MKNP PASu-DENR Report, 2010
NGOs who used to spearhead in many partnerships and other collaborative engagements have slowly made an exit as official part of the Protected Areas Management Board (PAMB). The civil society’s diminishing interest in taking an active role in the governance mechanism speaks more about the dynamics directly associated with the Board.

Some representatives of the sector have shared that the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park (MKNP) area is not conducive for NGO engagement given that the DENR has lots of bureaucratic requirements. From the perspective of local government officials and bureaucrats, few have commented that efficiency could have been enhanced if the governance mechanism is directly spearheaded by the local governments rather than by a national agency such as the DENR given that the former are ‘nearer’ to the problem being addressed.

We now look closely on actual meetings that the PAMB carries out in the performance of its policy formulation and decision-making roles. Based on personal interviews among several members of the Board, a common observation that came out was that too much time of their meetings were consumed debating on the Philippines National Oil Company – Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) related matters, with one estimating about 75 per cent of their time spent for it, sideling many other issues important in PA management. If we make an assessment relative to the mechanism’s primary goal on conservation, one does not have to think twice that the EDC geothermal project has resulted to more damage than benefit in area’s ecosystem. The National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) Law itself defines ‘buffer zones’ as “identified areas outside the boundaries of and immediately adjacent to designated protected areas pursuant to Section 8 that need special development control in order to avoid or minimize harm to the protected area”\(^{79}\). Given this particular governing actor’s contribution (or the absence thereof to say the least) in as far as this objective is concerned the governance mechanism appears to have inefficiently used its time.

In addressing the sustainable development objective, a more recent news article cites that the geothermal plant which sells its generated power to the Iloilo Electric

\(^{79}\) RA 7586, Sec.4(c)
Cooperative at P4.72 per kilowatt hour, has a projected capacity of 49 megawatts but has only been able to produce 8-9 MW of geothermal power leading the company to temporarily stop operations in July of 2011 for further study of its geothermal resources. Although the pronouncement of the EDC that it will ‘downsize’ its operation in the ‘buffer zone’ is taken by the Negros Environmental Watch and the Save Mt. Kanlaon Coalition as a ‘ploy’, the groups also argue that “if not for the sale of EDC to First Gen, the geothermal project in the MKNP would be a monstrous white elephant that siphoned off billions of the people’s money... Despite its numerous claims and reassurances, supposedly backed up by extensive scientific studies and technical findings through the 17 years, the geothermal project has dismally failed to achieve its objective to produce adequate geothermal power in the area". If the protesters’ claim is proven right, EDC’s previous publicity blitz may then just have created an illusion about its economic and ecological contributions. Supposing that it has in fact ‘gained’, at what cost to the Philippines government in general, and to the MKNP governance mechanism in particular was the material gain derived?

It is argued that institutional design entails “difficult judgments about...potential trade-offs that may be necessary between institutional goods such as deliberation, representation and efficiency” (Smith 2003 p.128). In the case of the MKNP governance mechanism, the difficulty seems to be aggravated when the weighing of the institutional goods is tainted by the pursuit for private interest whose desire to gain legitimacy will unduly sacrifice the efficiency of the costs that is borne collectively.

3.4 Coordination

Coordination efforts in the MKNP governance mechanism are facilitated at some points while hampered at others. The relatively inclusive representation which was a characteristic of the earlier stage of its operations has shown to be enabling for both ‘coordination among actors within a particular collective action’, as well as ‘coordination across different collective actions’ for the purpose of obtaining higher

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80 Philippine Daily Inquirer – Visayas, June 12, 2011 “Aquino urged to shut down geothermal power plant”
joint benefits or reducing their joint harm (Dryzek 1987 pp.48-51). The NGO and national government agency (NGA) earlier partnership in engaging with the local communities for example has generated wide support from the forest dependent people in its forest protection initiatives, contributing in the decrease of illegal forest activities in the area and in the mitigation of hazards like forest fires. As the NGO and NGA coordinated further with the local government units (LGU), it results to enhancement of the mechanism’s community-based approach in resource management. From the earlier priority on forest regulations enforcement, the other dimension on forest rehabilitation, as well as community livelihood component were also given attention since the LGU has both the resources and mandate to address them. In San Carlos City for instance, aside from the local government’s funding support, it provides 15 technicians for the agriculture and forestry projects in a particular barangay.\(^{81}\) On the other hand, in the City of Bago, it taps PASu-DENR personnel in the conduct of trainings for KGB members. It also provides the latter their logistical needs such as raincoats, boots, and foods during operations. The local government has been responsive to KGB’s requests especially given that the members are its own constituents. Moreover, although it does not have a specific budget for PAMB projects including the KGB’s activities, they have a regular budget for environmental protection and management that can cover relevant initiatives such as those.\(^{82}\)

In particular areas, gains from coordinating with the LGU which facilitates its direct involvement in community-based projects are notable. An interviewee’s past experience reveals that a national agency like the DENR alone cannot single-handedly protect the park using its ‘command and control’ approach. As this DENR employee has commented, “Participation by the communities, including the indigenous peoples has proven to be effective in helping protect Mt. Kanlaon especially given that they are forest-dependent people. And given their need which is

\(^{81}\)Barangay Codcod; interview, Tranquilino Gella Jr., former Chairman of Codcod KGB, and Barangay Councilor in 2007; June 2010.

\(^{82}\)In 2010, less than PhP1 million goes to forest protection which was taken from the PhP9-10 million out of the 20 per cent of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for the LGU annual development fund. The total 2010 budget for the city is PhP477 million. Source: Interview with Vicente Mesias, Supervising Environment Management Specialist, City Agriculture at the Mayor’s office, assigned to oversee the entire environment program of the Bago-LGU.
primarily economic, approaching forest protection with a livelihood component has been facilitative in gaining wider social acceptance from among the local communities, and it is good that some local governments could afford some assistance on this component beyond the CPPAP.\textsuperscript{83}

At present, some relevant actors are suggesting a modified institutional design for PAMB reflecting a declining interest for a continued coordination and engagement under the current set-up. As a respondent from local government side has put it: "The structure itself is not appropriate. Why is the Board chaired by the DENR Regional Director (RED)? Why not the Provincial Governor? Under the NIPAS, the Governor is not explicitly included. What will then be the province’s interest if the ownership belongs to the DENR? The words of the RED are still very strong, not really that democratic... The local governments are nearest to the people. If they are given greater responsibility to manage this protected area, then they will have higher accountability to the people who voted for them. If we give this management to the DENR who can’t even allocate funds for its operation, what will happen?"\textsuperscript{84} From the NGO camp on the other hand, a respondent has shared a consistent response. Because of previous experiences by NGO representatives in the MKNP PAMB where conflicts and misunderstanding are said to be poorly managed, and acknowledging DENR’s lack of funds, some members of the NGO community have accordingly influenced LGUs involved in the other and more recently established park within Negros to form a PAMB that is chaired by the Governor, and co-chaired by the DENR-RED.\textsuperscript{85}

Furthermore, for several NGO members and other government officials I have interviewed, they perceive some governing actors to be devious, particularly those high government authorities (including then President Arroyo) and the business company (EDC) whose directives, approval, or tolerance on certain decisions resulted to the anomalies encountered in the mechanism. Among the irregularities they cited include the favoured PAMB membership of the EDC, and some perceived legal violations in the course of the conservation mechanism’s operations.

In areas where local institutional arrangements resulted from various coordination efforts in the past, sustainability of some aspects of the governance mechanism can

\textsuperscript{83} Interview with Hernane Malabor, PAMB Operations Coordinator since 1998 to present; Also a Deputy PASu for 3 yrs already.

\textsuperscript{84} Interview with a Provincial rep in PAMB

\textsuperscript{85} Interview with a staff member of an NGO, Negros Forests and Ecological Foundation
reasonably be hoped for. What looks blurry however is its overall prospect especially
given that its credibility is remarkably problematic, degenerating the interest among
stakeholders to get involved in the formal decision-making arena which could have
been a strategic devise for coordination and policy-influencing collective decisions.
Coordination having a (or probably 'the') significant role in shaping a governance
mechanism’s design through its influence on the latter’s defining features, my initial
analysis suggests that it is also through it that a mechanism be appropriately
redesigned. This coordination mode will employ engagement of discourses through
creative communication as its primary tool. Enabling this kind of engagement will be
the deliberative processes of the governance mechanism that can unleash differing
interests and values, and clarify commonalities that can serve as foundation for
collective actions.

3.5 Resilience

Let us look into the resilience of the MKNP governance mechanism in both
ecological and social terms. It is noted that prior to the implementation of the
conservation mechanism, the top issue affecting the ecological integrity of the MKNP
was the decreasing size of the habitat, with a fragmented, degraded and disturbed
lowland and its forested areas. The diminishing quality of habitat had endangered the
numerous flora and fauna especially the endemic species, many of which are already
highly threatened of extinction. Along with the deterioration of its biodiversity
values, was the threat to its watershed capacity with vast of the areas converted into
other land uses, thereby affecting domestic, agricultural and industrial sources of
water even in the downstream areas. The increasing number of park occupants and
conflicting resource uses largely threatened the conservation of the park. Population
increase corresponds to an increase in socio-economic demands that encourages
further encroachment of forested areas for conversion into agricultural lands and
continued extraction of biological resources. The intensive agricultural use of the
park was aggravated by the lack of support system for sustainable form of
livelihood.\textsuperscript{86}

\textsuperscript{86}Source: MKNP Management Plan, 2001
More than a decade after the mechanism’s operations, there have been some indications of limited rehabilitated areas linked to various reforestation projects, but there is no available data to show the overall impact of the mechanism in terms of bringing what was a degraded ecosystem back to a healthier state. In some remote upland villages, my field observations and personal interviews reveal that the scarcity of water experienced by the villagers are perceived differently; while some consider the El Nino phenomenon as the reason behind the drying up of the rivers and creeks, others have blamed the geothermal exploration of PNOC-EDC at the forested site as the cause. There are also few individuals who argue that the water source has not decreased; rather, it is the population that has increased and men’s greed drives why the water supply can’t be enough to the populace, and so they hope for a regulation. In these villages, main source of livelihood among many residents primarily includes vegetable gardening; since the users are competing to access water in the area, they resort to getting the water directly from the main source up in the mountain, at MKNP’s strict protection zone, through hoses (as long as 90 meters each). In one creek scenario for instance, there are about 6 hoses that try to access water from it and each of these would bring the water to a particular household at the foothill which in turn will share the supply to 30 more families in the village. The water will then be used for drinking and other household consumptions, as well as for watering their vegetable gardens. Many villagers have complained about the absence of government support in addressing this issue, arguing that unless they have enough water supply they will continue to struggle in terms of livelihood, driving them to resort access to other forest products.

Based on the PASu-DENR reports on ‘milestones’ before and after the governance mechanism has commenced its functions, almost all of the accomplishments mentioned relate to the crafting of several institutional arrangements, formulation of guiding rules and regulations for forest protection, as well as their enforcement at community levels. Although not mentioned, interviews and review of PAMB meeting minutes have pointed out that lots of its discussions in the last decade are directly associated to the PNOC-EDC geothermal exploration project that NGOs have generally tried to resist but is seemingly welcomed by most LGUs and supported by NGAs. The commotion and institutional disaster resulting from the issue has also

87 Sitio Apog-apog, Sitio Nagalao, and Sito Iliran, Barangay Coadoc, San Carlos
tested the resilience of the MKNP governance mechanism. Sadly, it appears that its steering power has not been strong enough to stay firm on its mandate, leading further to wellbeing deterioration in both ecological and social dimensions; or perhaps more than its weakness, it has something to do with the strength of other forces greater than its own.

The foregoing discussions on criteria show that the MKNP governance mechanism has some basic 'institutional goods' that are potentially enabling; when a particular governance feature such as accountability is however neglected, its resultant impact has also weaken legitimacy. The prevailing tensions among features have spoiled the whole mechanism that it would probably take a structural change, more than just enhancement of processes in order for it to revive. The following section presents some consequential benefits or burdens brought about by the governance features' interactions impacting both ecological and human wellbeing.

4. Forest Governance Core Values

4.1 Distributive Justice

Various decisions and processes employed by the governance mechanism in MKNP have different consequences to different stakeholders.

The enforcement of the declaration of Mt. Kanlaon as a protected area has naturally prohibited many farmers including indigenous peoples and forest migrants from continually doing their usual livelihood activities in certain areas that they have been tilling for decades already. For some farmers, especially those in places characterized by 'haciendas', their already small parcel of land has further been reduced. This has consequently reduced their means of income, or products for household consumptions. Thus, one of the issues confronting the governing actors has been on land tenure involving indigenous peoples and identified 'tenured migrants'. A DENR policy requires that these farmers need to have tenurial instruments issued by the DENR prior to the latter's issuance of their permit to use some resources in the protected area. Given the DENR's limited funding and human resources, it has only processed the issuance of tenurial instruments for 1 barangay, leaving affected communities in 14 other barangays without them, and therefore prohibiting them
from utilizing the resource within the area. As a PASu-DENR official has suggested, "Given that the delay is largely due to some administrative constraints on the part of the DENR, there should be some mechanism allowing them to use the resource at their farms in the area without having to wait for more than a decade now since the establishment of Mt. Kanlaon as a protected area."88

The tenurial instruments are crucial for the local communities affected by the conservation mechanism. The processing of which in order to benefit the farmers and lessen the burden of conservation that is borne by them could have been prioritized and efficiently facilitated if not because of other issues especially those associated with the EDC’s geothermal operation which consumed so much of the PAMB’s time during Board meetings. Why was the EDC issue given more priority to the extent of sacrificing other values more important for the local communities and the forests? Surely, it is not simply because of some influential individual actors putting more values on perceived economic growth than on others. Every respondent whom I have talked with consider all the core values of justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability important to a varying degree. Most of them value both livelihood and the environment the highest. Despite holding on these values however, their decisions and collective actions have been very much dictated by government directives. The more powerful influence has surely been the government’s development priorities. With the governance mechanism’s accountability being weak or wanting, some actors are also able to advance their private interests in the name of development, at the expense of those least advantaged.

Furthermore, there is an incentive for local governments to side with the ‘EDC camp’ because discourse have also been framed by state-business actors in a way that if one is supportive of the geothermal project, it means helping address the power shortage problem experienced by the people who are the local government officials’ constituents themselves. While people share common values which potentially serve as converging points for collective actions that can benefit the least advantaged, it is the broader system within which the governing actors reside that either helps or hinders the realization of an authoritative decision.

88Interview with Hernane Malabor, PAMB Operations Coordinator since 1998 to present; Also a Deputy PASu for 3 yrs already.
4.2 Ecosystem Protection

With regards to ecosystem protection, observations and perceptions by the locals reflect both gains and losses associated to the MKNP governance mechanism. Through the facilitation done by the assisting NGO during the earlier phase of the establishment of the protected area, when the World Bank-funded project was also implemented, an estimated 250-300 local forest volunteers were organized, constituting the Kanlaon Green Brigade (KGB). The KGB served as a pillar of support in the day to day forest protection and conservation. Its formationsince 1996 has accordingly helped in the decrease of illegal forest activities in the area; compared to the earlier period for example when truckloads of illegally cut trees, and a weekly delivery of hundreds of sacks of charcoal were ordinary sights. Some rehabilitation of denuded areas was also made possible primarily through the efforts of the KGB and other community members with the support from the governing actors. However, as already indicated earlier, these initiatives have waned. This has been largely due to the absence of funds to support operations, and the lessening coordination with the exit of relevant NGOs in the area. When people were asked about their perception on the status of the forest in the area, the general view (including that from the PASu-DENR) is that it has deteriorated. The entry of the geothermal project has also been perceived by many relevant actors especially those from outside the state as a manifestation of failure on the part of the governance mechanism. In one of their position papers, civil society members expressed their sentiment saying that they were “appalled that the geothermal project has cut down thousands of endangered forest trees, destroyed and dislocated countless wild flora and fauna, contaminated with toxic effluents upland waterways and permanently altered the landscape and territorial boundaries of the MKNP”.

Examining the health of the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Parkis tricky given that none of the official documents associated to the governance mechanism has recorded the current status of the ecosystem in any way. The reports I have accessed for instance only show the percentage of the natural forest cover left relative to the land area in each political jurisdiction, but there is no benchmark data with which we can at least infer the change. A record of the number of cases on forest law violations from 2005-2010 cannot also be relied upon, without any information even on the volume of confiscated logs if any, and especially given that there has been a decrease of forest
protection volunteers. These gaps notwithstanding, I argue that the MKNP governance mechanism’s structure and processes have generally failed to protect the forest ecosystem. This has been evident in its incapacity to stop the intrusion of the geothermal exploration in the buffer zone covered with forest characterized with a very rich biodiversity. This is a blatant violation of a law, yet the situation is more complex than it seems given that it is allegedly committed by the State itself. It is ironic that a government agency (together with a business company) was sued by civil society representatives for an act that violates a law that it is expected to enforce, and destroys the forests that it is mandated to protect. But then again, recall that government field personnel in the area have been trying their best to perform their functions. The issues in Kanlaon seem to point out the bigger role of the broader political-economic system as a determining factor in influencing outcomes of a governance mechanism that operates within it. And while there are certain good developments in promoting forest protection in Mt. Kanlaon, it has not advanced yet the ecosystem’s wellbeing in the bigger scheme of things.

The 2001 version of the MKNP management plan states the need for a research on the ecosystem aspect, but there appears to be no effort yet on this regard. While this doesn’t speak anything on ecosystem’s health, it speaks something about the governance mechanism, sounding its seriousness to address the forest protection objective, questionable. While financial constraint could be considered as a factor, prioritization of objectives cannot be brushed aside.

### 4.3 Livelihood Protection

Like in many other cases elsewhere, the local livelihoods among farmers in MKNP have been adversely affected by its declaration as a protected area, limiting them access and use of the resource. Local communities have different ways of coping. In an upland village in San Carlos, a tribal leader has shared that the declaration has facilitated a change in the means or in the approaches employed for livelihood by some villagers. In their neighbourhood in particular, he said that the declaration has pushed some former illegal loggers back to farming, and having observed that some middle men from the city buy their products very cheaply, they have thought of finding means to augment their income especially that logging would no longer be a
viable option, leading the locals to go to the market themselves and sell their products directly from the farm for a much higher price than with having middle men. This creative way of responding the situation does not however apply to many.

Let us consider the case of Andong\textsuperscript{89} from La Castellana who typifies most of the affected farmers in the protected area. The PA declaration has meant significant reduction of his income. His land use rights have been limited now from his previous 1.5 ha. to just \textfrac{1}{4} ha. From what is now left, he has a monthly income of little more than PhP1000 only (around USD24) from the \textfrac{1}{4} ha. In order to feed his family with 7 children, he also needs to work as labourer in the hacienda in another town earning PhP90 (2USD) daily minus PhP30 bus fare. Granting he willwork for 25 days a month there, he can earn PhP1500 monthly (USD36), but it means he no longer have time for his \textfrac{1}{4} ha. of land left. His current earning is only 1/3 of what he used to gain prior to the enforcement of the conservation measure.

Given the impact of the mechanism on local livelihoods, the earlier mentioned tenurial instrument would mean a lot to many forest-dependent people like Andong. However, the ongoing political dynamics among actors at the governing body has accordingly delayed and/or hindered the approval of the tenurial instruments (i.e. Community-based resource management agreement) which could have been awarded to Peoples Organizations in 14 more villages, and not just to the only 1 village that has been completed. And it could have improved a lot the farmers’ use rights at the protected area, and therefore, protecting or improving their livelihoods.

Efforts have been made by the governing actors in addressing this issue especially during the World Bank’s CPPAP implementation. Sustaining them however proves to be problematic. While there have been related activities being supported by LGUs in some sites, as mentioned earlier, it is more of an exception than the rule. Since the World Bank project ended in 2002, requests by the local communities spearheaded by the KGBs have been raised at the PAMB regarding livelihood assistance, but to no avail in many villages for more than 5 years already. Only in 2007 when one NGO came back to the MKNP site and started a cattle fattening project, and in 2010, assistance on fruit tree seedlings for agroforestry was introduced; the priority beneficiaries of which are the volunteer forest guards.

\textsuperscript{89} Andong is a fictitious name of one of the farmers I have interviewed in the area
The absence or the weakness in addressing livelihood protection is not due to the lack of awareness from the side of the governing actors about its significance in forest protection. Nor is it attributed primarily to the exit of the World Bank project. Some close interactions with the PASu-DENR personnel have further validated my contention that the problem is more systemic than just about some particular actors' prioritization of values. While the latter influence the structure within which they operate, the former constraints the operation itself.

Values can shape decisions and collective actions but the fact that efforts to protect livelihood have been wanting does not necessarily mean that the governing actors have not valued livelihood protection. State actors at the field level for instance have themselves spoken about how convinced they are on the significance of livelihood protection as a priority for sustainable forest management and conservation. When well-funded during the CPPAP time, they had several initiatives in trying to address the problem. Beyond that period, it became very challenging for them to sustain the activities due to reasons such as lack of funds on the part of the national agency spearheading the governance mechanism, as well as lack of time – but these factors are embedded in bigger issues and should therefore be analyzed not in isolation, but in connection with the broader structure where the actors work. Lack of funding for example could have been addressed if relevant local governments and NGOs continued their coordination and support, but the deteriorating legitimacy of the mechanism made this unworkable.

4.4 Sustainability

The Kanlaon case exhibits the clashing priorities between conservation of the environment, and development, which if not managed effectively, becomes a threat to sustainability. While there is a danger that poor forest-dependent people may overexploit the common pool resources, in the case examined, they don’t appear to be the biggest problem that confronts the governance mechanism in this aspect. Instead, it is the State’s drive for development that ruins what were earlier perceived as good initiatives for both forests and people. It stems from its desire for material progress buttressed by its close association with the business sector that creates a blind spot in the sustainability equation. It puts forward an agenda that was packaged as
sustainable development’ when in fact it sacrifices the latter by paying more attention on the development side, undermining sustainable practices in the process.

The abovementioned dynamics has big repercussions in the overall governance mechanism. The inconsistencies and ironies reflected in decisions made by the PAMB driven by higher State authorities have tainted its credibility. This has discouraged the non-state actors to continue their engagement as official members of the governing body. NGOs have become inactive inside the empowered space, although they remain vigilant at the public space. The forest volunteers are now less supported with the absence of foreign funding aggravated by the decreasing collaborations that were used to be facilitated by NGOs with the local governments. And some members of the field personnel from relevant national government agency have felt demoralized. The state itself then became the stumbling block in the realization of its goal in employing a decentralized and multi-sectoral approach in natural resource management with the aim of having sustainable outcomes for both forests and people.

With the recent change of administration and leadership at the national level, some stakeholders in the MKNP are hoping for a more sustainability-enabling socio-political setting. While this can be a cause for optimism, I argue that changes need to be rooted from a change of outlook, recognizing that development has many facets imbued with differing interests and values which the State needs to accommodate, weigh, and resolve. Neglect of which undermines its credibility, rendering its dominated governance mechanism a peril to sustainability.

5. Concluding Remarks

The case of the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park highlights how a state’s priority for development that is tied up with a profit-seeking business enterprise can easily neglect its accountability to the people. Such priority tends to obscure justice considerations and overlooks forest ecosystem protection. It may be projected as an initiative that advances sustainability, but its actions and effects speak otherwise, which mars the governing actor’s credibility. The case also points out that when
accountability is undermined, a low legitimacy inevitably follows, leading to a disintegration of the governance mechanism.

Recall that like the other two cases, the kind of governance mode employed for the protected area of Mt. Kanlaon is in principle, networked. What prevails however is the centrality of the State’s hierarchical authority which provides a facilitating atmosphere in putting forward its development agenda. Its complex bureaucracy makes it extra challenging for the non-state actors in the decision-making arena to change the State’s positions on matters supposedly subjected for discussions. The case also shows that even within the State, its actors in its different units can have views and values incompatible with the State priorities but more often, they end up finding themselves following orders from the top, unlike the non-state actors who may choose to disengage and find another platform for collective actions.

The civil society’s vigilance plays a significant role in enhancing discursive engagements which can be instrumental in pressing for the accountability of a governance mechanism. While the public space provides a home for contestations, the empowered space seems to need these if accountability is not just to be advanced, but something to be regained to win back social acceptability and improve legitimacy. But then again, the non-state actors’ influence in decision-making in the context of a multi-sectoral governance body largely depends on the state actors’ capacity to shift its role from a controlling, to a facilitating agency that steers a pluralism of interests and values in coming up with collective actions that address both environmental sustainability and human security.
CHAPTER 7
COMPARATIVE CASE ANALYSIS

1. Introduction

Forest policies have been a focus of global concern for a quarter of a century already since the loss and degradation of tropical forests first began to command the international community’s attention. During this period, there has been an evolving focus on forest governance (McDermott et al. 2010). In the Philippines in particular, an approach involving ‘telling people what to do’ or ‘keeping them out’ was observed to have gradually changed to one of ‘bringing them in’ as partners in conservation initiatives in the last three decades. The significant resources and rethinking that have transformed forest policy in the country have not realized their environmental goals, although certain policies, programs, and projects associated with participatory conservation have clearly fared better than their ‘top-down’ or authoritarian predecessors (Bagadion, Jr. et al. 2000). But then even high profile programs linked to the participatory approach as the last three chapters revealed have had, at best, mixed results. Comparisons among cases - the processes and structures involved, hopefully facilitates a better explanation of the answers to the broader question on what forest governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing.

The governance mechanisms in the three forest protected areas involved in the study vary in their performance and all present challenges as well as opportunities for the governing actors to manage. As the cases reveal, each of the mechanism’s features largely determine the quality of outcomes. In chapters 4-6, I have focused on describing and analyzing forest governance features and outcomes within cases. In this chapter, I compare them across the cases and highlight what the empirical findings suggest about patterns or trends associated to forest management and conservation. I begin with a summary table (Table 2) of the key points from each case study against the criteria and the core values that I have used. I then proceed with the discussions that look into the different governance criteria, identifying salient factors across cases that either support or undermine the strength of each.
Applying the forest governance analytical framework that I presented in chapter 2, I use the five criteria of good forest governance (i.e. legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination, and resilience) in analyzing interactions and relationships involved in various structures and processes. And I examine how these features influence outcomes in terms of the core values for ecological and human wellbeing (i.e. distributive justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability), before concluding the chapter.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>A. Governance Criteria</th>
<th>Case 1 Sierra Madre</th>
<th>Case 2 Kitanglad</th>
<th>Case 3 Kanlaon</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Legitimacy</strong></td>
<td>Tokenistic participation Low credibility and trust Strong foreign funding with weak local support</td>
<td>Local participation is transformative Indigenous knowledge and cultural integration</td>
<td>Unfair representation Protests &amp; legal action Vibrant civil society State-dominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
<td>Connivance, and condoning illegal logging, and corruption Short-lived rule of law Laxity in monitoring &amp; evaluation</td>
<td>Tensions in overlapping jurisdictions Deliberation facilitates workable agreements High investments in IEC</td>
<td>Poorly managed conflicts Favoring membership of a business corporation Policy infringements</td>
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<td><strong>Cost-efficiency</strong></td>
<td>International NGOs’ complex bureaucracy Externally-driven initiatives as costly Logistical challenges in representation</td>
<td>Discursive engagements facilitate knowledge exchange &amp; cost-sharing Spread leadership and reduced transaction cost Simple bureaucracy and flexibility</td>
<td>Linkages enhance efficiency. Hierarchy and complex bureaucracy Forest volunteers as cost-saving strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coordination</strong></td>
<td>Low credibility among governing actors hinders coordination</td>
<td>Discursive coordination Harmonization of relevant legislations</td>
<td>Low credibility among governing actors &amp; non-state actors disengagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resilience</strong></td>
<td>Economic growth priority and corruption challenge solutions to environmental problems. Local potentials and capabilities undermined.</td>
<td>Local institutions and innovative capacities Accountability, legitimacy, and coordination reinforce resilience of the governance mechanism in steering human and ecological systems back to normal operating range in the face of severe ecological problems.</td>
<td>Weak accountability and coordination threaten resilience of the governance mechanism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Core Values</strong></td>
<td>Forest-dependent people adversely impacted by unfair allocation of benefits and burdens in forest conservation efforts. Lack of coordination and weak accountability as constraining factors</td>
<td>Deliberation facilitates ingenuity and productivity, increasing the livelihood options of forest-dependent communities.</td>
<td>Private interests in the name of development and at the expense of the already disadvantaged and the marginalized populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distributive Justice</strong></td>
<td>Deteriorating ecosystem Forest depletion aggravated by rampant illegal logging</td>
<td>Improving forest and biodiversity. Volunteers’ role in abating illegal forest activities</td>
<td>Geothermal operation inside the protected area’s buffer zone damaging forest and biodiversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ecosystem Protection</strong></td>
<td>Reduced income without alternative livelihood Neglect of justice hinders livelihood protection</td>
<td>Justice considerations enhance livelihood options</td>
<td>The problem hindering livelihood protection reflects beyond value preferences among governing actors overpowered by the broader socio-political setting within which the governance mechanism operates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Livelihood Protection</strong></td>
<td>Private sector’s profit, government’s economic growth priority, and local communities’ desire for livelihood facilitate extractive activities.</td>
<td>An approach to conservation that does not neglect development needs leads to a more sustainable outcome. Synergy among the governance criteria improves sustainability.</td>
<td>Resource exploitation favored over resource regeneration Ecosystem sustainability and socio-economic security dilemma has not been addressed with priority given to economic growth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Forest Governance Criteria

2.1 Legitimacy

As indicated in the earlier chapters, legitimacy relates to the degree of acceptance by those who are governed regarding the intervention as appropriate and desirable. One of the legitimacy-enhancing elements as shown in the case studies is civil society’s participation through building of local institutions for support. This proves to be particularly useful given the inherent significant role of the central government in the governance mechanism. Kitanglad and partly the Kanlaon case had illustrated that recognition of local knowledge and expertise, and integration of indigenous culture to broader management structures facilitate culturally sensitive policies and practice which widens acceptance on the appropriateness of the intervention. NGOs and other actors’ localness in the area with a record of long engagements with the indigenous peoples and other forest dwellers had also served as an enabling factor for this feature in these sites. In Sierra Madre on the other hand, involvement of local communities had been generally tokenistic and instrumental rather than transformative, and so meaningful engagements that allow for reflection, contestation, and/or acceptance had been wanting.

The governing actors’ credibility matters in view of how the governed assesses the legitimacy of the mechanism. Where this is lacking such as in the Sierra Madre and Kanlaon cases as shown in Table 2 above, which had been characterized by anomalies and protests, legitimacy was low. The fact that some of the people involved in irregularities are members of the governing body rendered the procedural legitimacy of the governance mechanism highly questionable and degraded. Another element in Kitanglad which appeared very weak in the other cases was the governing actors’ strong sense of ownership of the initiatives brought about by various communicative interactions which facilitated broader support and deeper commitment. In this case, invoking supportive pieces of legislation was also used as a tool in further legitimizing the innovative ways employed by the governing actors, enabling various sectors’ performance of their significant roles in the overall forest governance.

Discourse has power that can be tapped in many ways, and discourse framing has a silent presence underlying some engagements relevant to governance. It is used as a
device by governing actors in attempting to seek legitimacy. For example, government bias on economic growth and development priorities using discourse as a tool for promotion seemed to help justify particular governance mechanism’s operations, gaining support from the locals. In Sierra Madre’s discourse, both legal and illegal logging has been associated to local livelihoods and local government revenues. In Kanlaon on the other hand, a discourse packages the geothermal plant operation in the buffer zone as a sustainable development initiative, an alternative and sustainable energy source that addresses the people’s electricity shortage. These discourses eventually marred the many processes and approaches involved however, undermining accountability, which in turn weakened the mechanism’s overall legitimacy as exhibited in both cases. While in one case, the discourse had its way of undermining the damage brought about by the overexploitation of the forests, condoning some illegalities involved; in the other, it served as an excuse to contravene a law and encourage production as a priority over resource protection.

Another important point that relates to legitimacy is representation. Analysis of the three cases tells us that although important, a relatively high level of sectoral representation does not guarantee legitimacy. This is not surprising however given that representation of the sectors does not necessarily translate to representativeness of the interests that the sectors hold which can be as heterogeneous as the variety of values that each individual desires. Also, emphasis on representation may be at odds with the issue of cost-efficiency when dealing with both funding and human resource constraints relative to scale. An overall legitimacy of the governance mechanism seemed to be only evident in the Kitanglad case where beyond representation was a relatively good quality of participation, with strong investment on communicative approaches such as dialogue and deliberation during planning and other decision-making processes. In the case at hand, tensions initially occurred brought about by the differing mandates, priorities and programs among participating sectors or agencies in the governance mechanism. There were also conflicts triggered by overlapping authorities with regards to the protected area that involves indigenous peoples. Although not everything has been addressed, employing deliberative processes had facilitated better understanding and teased out points where different interests could converge and be converted into collective actions to advance commonly held values.
2.2 Accountability

Accountability is a dimension of input or procedural legitimacy which affects effectiveness. One of the identified barriers to improved environmental governance performance is poorly structured accountability system. If it is perceived to be unfair for instance, governing actors tend to try protecting themselves, sometimes leaving the governance mechanism, pursuing opportunities that seem more just (Metzenbaum 2002 p.99). This is exemplified in the Kanlaon case when the observed government bias to a corporate player leads to civil society representatives’ disengagement from the formal decision-making arena, opting to express their views and contestations through other modes such as public rally, lobbying, litigation, and tapping the mass media for information dissemination. On the other hand, if the accountability system is characterized with laxity in terms of monitoring, evaluation, penalties, and sanctions, it encourages further violations of conservation rules and regulations – a situation reflected in the Sierra Madre case when a massive portion of the governed and some governing actors continued to get involved in illegalities for decades.

In either Sierra Madre or Kanlaon site, the accountability system undermined inclusivity and rule of law, hindering a good governance performance. Instead of having rules aimed to prevent ‘the politics of personal favouritism and gain from meddling in administrative decisions...’ for a better service delivery, the system became the ‘objective’ itself, with actors ‘trying to protect... or extricate themselves’ from it (Metzenbaum 2002 pp.93-99). Poor accountability can unduly disadvantage some actors while benefiting others, creating a situation in which much of the governing actors’ time and energy are then spent making adjustments in order to gain from the governance mechanism rather than lose from it. This has been exhibited for instance when lenience in the law enforcement in Sierra Madre has encouraged poor members of the local communities, as well as personnel of a powerful state agency to connive in illegal economic activities given that the system readily allows it. Accountability issue has also driven civil society members in the Kanlaon case to take a legal action against a state agency and a business company due to the governance mechanism’s perceived procedural inequality.

Some scholars suggest that one way to reform a flawed accountability system is to employ information-based and performance-driven measures which advocate the
concept of rewarding good performance and penalizing a bad one (Kettl 2002; Metzenbaum 2002). This may work to a certain extent, but the danger of a ‘target-oriented’ approach such as this which focuses much on the performance as basis for incentive is that it can easily undermine the quality of the processes contributing the outcomes which in the long run can be self-defeating. A lesson can be learned from this study on this aspect when well-meaning activities which were tailored to comply with the donor’s quantitative targets have failed to meet the broader objective for both forests and people. The same can be said when a stringent forest law enforcement was short-lived. To avoid the pitfall, what seems to be crucial for the governing actors is an emphasis on communicative interactions to enhance understanding of the critical linkages between outcomes and their objectives for a more even-handed assessment of performance.

The mode of governance exhibited in the three case studies does not only consist of a dichotomy of government regulators on the one hand and the regulated on the other, but of a complex web of government regulatory agencies and private sector organizations and individuals pursuing conservation and development goals (Wilson 2002). While a more intertwined public-private and global or national-local authority characterizes all the cases, the processes that define accountability and the other features such as legitimacy, efficiency, coordination and resilience, are the ones that shape their respective governance ‘hardware’ or the institutional arrangements that greatly influence political dynamics. These arrangements can be characterized to be state-dominated or donor-driven for example, and they are strengthened or weakened by the processes and discourses employed which when taken individually or together, is a crucial factor determining performance. There is strength in plurality of inputs from public-private partnerships for a better informed environmental policy formulation and decision-making. The three cases however showed that while this is desirable, the multi-sectoral nature of a governance mechanism had rendered the accountability feature more challenging. Its system had the tendency to be diluted by the multiplicity of interests and priorities involved which became a drawback in the absence of creative ways to counter the ensuing effect of undermining incentives to hold the actors more accountable.

In both the Sierra Madre and Kanlaon cases, accountability weakness had encouraged corrupt practices that have tarnished the ‘credibility’ of many governing actors which
is an essential quality especially in a more complex mechanism such as in the cases under investigation (Kronsell and Backstran 2010) while at the same time had aggravated ecological damage in the forests. As the cases had illustrated, corruption is an obstacle to sound environmental decision-making. While it is a consequence of weakness in accountability, it is also a cause weakening the latter and therefore contributing to governance failure in environmental policy implementation. Poor accountability system depicted by a prolonged laxity in enforcement of regulations that has developed a culture of tolerance for more than 3 decades like in the Sierra Madre case, and aggravated by the country’s long standing tradition of patronage politics where connivance and mutual support between businessmen and politicians is a common scene have all made possible some unfair distribution of benefits and burdens among stakeholders, and overexploitation of the forest resources.

While it is now widely recognized that governance accountability can be strengthened when stakeholders gain better access to information and participate in decision-making, it is the quality of the information and the nature of participation that spell the difference. In situations that involve the indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities for example, what looks essential is the ensuing stakeholders’ ‘empowerment’ defined by Young (1997 p.91) as a “process in which individual, relatively powerless persons engage in dialogue with each other and thereby come to understand the social sources of their powerlessness and see the possibility of acting collectively to change their social environment”.

In the Kitanglad case, one effective way of addressing the earlier cited accountability challenge has been its attention given beyond peoples’ representation and participation. High priority has been invested on ‘soft projects’ such as information, education, and other communication programs as indicated in Table 2. Moreover, capacity-building activities among the governing actors and the broader communities employ deliberation as an important tool that makes enlightened constituents more vigilant on the governance mechanism’s responsibility, and liberates the governing actors from the stalemate-causing tensions, creating instead an enabling environment for ‘workable agreements’ leading to collective actions.

The accountability strength in Kitanglad in contrast to the accountability weakness in both Sierra Madre and Kanlaon had also pointed out a salient role that their
governance arrangement had played in either improving or undermining accountability and performance. Given the mandate of the state within the multi-sectoral policy and decision-making body, the complexity of its bureaucratic hierarchy posed a threat across the three governance mechanisms in blurring interactions among actors, rendering accountability more difficult. As the earlier chapters have shown, Kitanglad had dealt with it better than the latter cases characterized by donor-driven initiatives and state-dominance respectively.

2.3 Cost-Efficiency

Conservation and development projects are instruments used to address natural resource degradation issues. A lot of these initiatives are financed by international agencies through overseas development aid, as well as by local actors. The forest sector has been a highly oiled area in terms of foreign investment, yet failure in addressing forest depletion remains a very common observation in developing countries. Salient questions to ask: at what costs has a conservation governance mechanism improved or at least protected the conditions of the environment? Does achieving a better performance entail more resource need and spending in terms of personnel, funds, and time?

The case studies reveal that cost is not directly proportional with outcome. Among the three cases, namely: The Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park, Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park, and the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park, the governance mechanism of Kitanglad which is in fact most cost-efficient in decision-making also performs best in both ecological and social terms. The most costly on the other hand which is the Sierra Madre case has the poorer performance in promoting ecological and human wellbeing.

Among the efficiency-enabling factors present in the Kitanglad case were the following: building on indigenous knowledge, tradition, and other local institutions, and empowering those involved in taking responsibilities of their actions thus spreading leadership roles which have avoided a likely higher level of transaction costs that could have accrued in creating and managing new systems; the ‘localness’ of key governing actors have likewise facilitated a simple bureaucracy that saves
resources; and flexibility, as well as coordination have also served as strategies for the cost-efficiency of the mechanism. On the other hand, what appeared to be elements that have contributed to higher costs in the other governance mechanisms’ decision-making include but are not limited to: complex bureaucracy on the part of the government and the implementing international NGO respectively, as well as the ensuing political dynamics among different governing actors; externally-driven initiatives when they were not integrated in existing local institutions; personal presence of representative-actors in the formal decision-making arena; and other issues associated with scale.

In the empirical research undertaken, among the scale-related concerns for example is the geographical size of a protected area, the time and funding needed when a large number of indigenous peoples’ representatives are required, the layers of authority to deal with when operating in a complex bureaucracy, or the demand for integrative thinking when the objectives to be addressed are geared toward sustainable development. Issues on scale are not often highlighted in many studies and seem to be easily overlooked. However, not addressing them has the potential to undermine some creative ways which can enhance cost-efficiency, at the same time can actually be crucial in shaping the design of a governance strategy that influence outcomes. As Kettl (2002 p.179) has put it, maintaining ecological gains while addressing unresolved social concerns that relate to logistical constraints requires innovative approaches to “squeeze more environmental performance from a tight budget”.

In the issue of representation and participation for instance, it has been recognized that traditional knowledge significantly contributes in addressing environmental change. Yet, we know that most of the indigenous peoples and other local knowledge holders often live in remote places that their access to formal decision-making arenas would likely pose a significant logistical challenge especially in the context of materially poor communities. This makes it more important to design strategies that maximize the value of their inputs in ways that more genuinely reflect their interests. Would this mean that a priority be given to inviting as many representatives as possible in the decision-making body’s meetings? But given the logistical reality, is there a more creative way of effectively obtaining their inputs and incorporating them in decision-making without sacrificing efficiency?
The case studies revealed that the more cost-efficient forest governance mechanism had also managed better in democratizing environmental decision-making. While cost-efficiency is not a precondition for accountability or input legitimacy, the Kitanglad case had affirmed that a trade-off between cost-efficiency and effectiveness which is enabled by the input legitimacy of the mechanism, can be more illusory than real.

2.4 Coordination

The earlier discussions of the three cases in Chapters 4-5 suggest gains of coordination and disadvantages of its absence. In both the Kitanglad and the Kanlaon cases, we saw how some linkages between state and non-state actors have generated wider support from the indigenous and other forest-dependent people to various governance initiatives which has enhanced the overall cost-efficiency as well as effectiveness particularly for the Kitanglad case. It avoided unnecessary duplication of efforts, but rather led the latter to complement each other. It thus managed to address some logistical gaps and challenges faced when personnel and funding were limited. Moreover, coordination among actors and harmonization of some relevant laws were an important strategy that fostered understanding needed in the resolution of some earlier tensions brought about by plurality of values and priorities, and some overlapping management rights.

The Sierra Madre case painted a contrasting picture to that of Kitanglad. Its low level of coordination and a resulting absence of clear and strategic integration of initiatives in local structures and programs had meant a relatively low degree of support from among the local communities and other stakeholders. This became more evident with the exit of foreign funding, and so local actors were left on their own. Failure to harmonize interpretations of relevant laws (for example, NIPAS Act and the IPRA) had also meant not coming up with ‘workable agreements’ in relation to what appeared to have conflicting implications on the ground. In Sierra Madre and Kanlaon, poorly managed conflicts and misunderstandings were also attributed to the lack of coordination. Both cases highlighted that one of the factors discouraging coordination within and across social choices was the low level of trust brought about by the lack of credibility among some governing actors.
While lack of credibility was a barrier to coordination; lack of coordination also exacerbated actors’ credibility issue and the presence thereof has the potential to improve it. In the Kitanglad case we saw how partnerships, collaboration, dialogues, and deliberation have spontaneously led to some novel accountability mechanisms which helped in keeping the governing actors do their work. As a deliberative governance strategy, Innes and Booher (2003) aver that collaborative dialogue among diverse and interdependent stakeholders can produce: reciprocity, relationships, learning, and creativity. The deliberative nature of the many engagements in the Kitanglad case as shown in Chapter 4 had enabled its governance mechanism to rise beyond differing organizational mandates and agendas as well as personal biases, building instead on commonly held values as sufficient foundation for collective actions.

Governance involves the establishment and operation of the ‘rules of the game’; and this does not presuppose the need to establish ‘material entities or organization’, but rather social institutions or governance systems playing the role of solving collective-action problems that emerge from interactions among interdependent actors (Ostrom 1990; Young 1994). This solving-problem capacity seems to work best when the social mechanism tasked to do it is both coordinative and deliberative in nature. As the case studies had shown, coordination facilitated knowledge exchange and cost-sharing. The synergies it built contributed to a governance mechanism’s cost-efficiency and effectiveness. This was however possible only with having discourse as its tool of engagement in which communication is the precondition that is preferably deliberative. A discursive engagement is evident for example in the Kitanglad case when the relevant agencies resolved overlapping jurisdictions and conflicting pieces of legislation through consultation and dialogues; or in the Kanlaon case when through deliberation, the non-state actors in the governance mechanism succeeded to a certain extent in stopping the government and a business corporation in extending the area for geothermal project operation within the buffer zone. I analogize coordination here with a motorized vehicle, with discourse as its oil and deliberative communication as its steering wheel, that without the latter two elements it can hardly perform its function. While communication can enhance a governance feature, it however needs an enabling institutional strategy for it to be salient; one that enables coordination as an instrument for collective action.
2.5 Resilience

With a growing concern on environmental change, there is a widening interest on resilience as a desirable attribute supporting adaptation. While the previously discussed criteria of legitimacy, accountability, efficiency, and coordination are necessary conditions, resilience as employed here is contingent, required only during a crisis germane to the socio-ecological system under consideration. The case studies revealed that the governance mechanism that was resilient in bringing deteriorated social and ecological systems back to their healthier state is also the one with high legitimacy, accountability, efficiency, and coordination: Kitanglad. The case study particularly illustrated how an enhanced accountability and legitimacy contributed to the mechanism’s resilience. Performing a significant role in a mechanism’s resilience as shown in this case were the local institutional arrangements and capacity which included but were not limited to local governments’ fiscal and policy support, local NGO’s co-facilitation, and indigenous peoples’ strong participation as well as these local actors’ share in the leadership roles. The ability to access multiple resources through coordinated efforts contributed to peoples’ capabilities to manage environmental change and crisis. Tapping traditional systems of governance and social networks improved the ability to collectively make decisions and actions while dissipating shocks and reinforcing innovative capacities.

The above attributes appeared wanting in the Sierra Madre case whose governance mechanism’s heavy reliance on foreign funding and external support undermines local potentials and capabilities in restoring the socio-ecological system’s wellbeing. Moreover, in both Sierra Madre and Kanlaon cases (see Table 2), we saw how pursuit for economic growth and other developmental objectives had challenged remedies of ecological damage. Laws and regulations had at times been circumvented and violated due to greed and/or in the name of human need. Accountability systems hardly worked given the overpowering role of the state and the complexity of its bureaucracy which had further diluted its relationships with other relevant actors favouring resource exploitation over conservation or resource regeneration.

The above criteria are interconnected. While some actors perceive tensions, others see more the opportunities offered in their interconnectedness in terms of the synergies created. The following section will present how the performance of the different
features of governance have promoted, maintained, or undermined the core values aimed to be maximized for human and ecological wellbeing.

3 Forest Governance Core Values

3.1 Distributive Justice

The concern on justice adds complexity to the already challenging ecological problems, but any environmental governance mechanism that endeavours to promote human wellbeing along with its ecological objective must confront it. More often, forest conservation mechanism in a developing country aimed at protecting a common pool resource to achieve benefits at various levels tends to adversely affect the already disadvantaged and marginalized populations the most. Special attention then needs to be given to them. As the Sierra Madre case had shown, the declaration of a forested land as a protected area had meant serious income crises on the part of many members of the local communities who were previously workers of the now closed industrial logging companies that operated in the site for decades. In the Kitanglad and the Kanlaon cases, the limited access to certain areas that indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent members of the local communities had also been tilling for ages had resulted to income reduction or loss to a number of households, a situation which was more significant in some parts of Kanlaon where the prevalence of ‘haciendas’ in the region had already historically reduced the farmers’ land.

In trying to address the cost borne by the locals, strategies employed included introduction of alternative livelihoods. Its implementation depicted different stories across the sites. A stumbling block for its success as the Sierra Madre and the Kanlaon cases had shown, although in different degrees, was directly associated to lack of coordination, and weak accountability which resulted to low level of input legitimacy. On the other hand, the opposite of these characteristics was observable at Kitanglad which in the eyes of its stakeholders had performed well in terms of allocation of benefits and incentives. As already mentioned, the latter case did not necessarily represent one in which local communities had not faced the conservation’s impact on income or their means of livelihood. It is not an exception in this respect, but through various deliberative engagements among actors, it
managed to shift reactions from being adversarial to those that encouraged ingenuity and productivity. This shifting of reactions has important implications for justice as social in nature, or as a ‘plural’ concept. It is not tantamount to passive acceptance of others’ views and values. Rather, the deliberation has facilitated deeper understanding and one’s recognition of other interests. As such, the affected individuals transcend their notion of themselves into ‘beings-in-the-world-with-others’, and therefore extending their conceptualization of what is good for them to that which is also good for other affected people since there is now a better awareness of values other their own.

A question on equity was also evident in the aspect of giving opportunity to participate in the formal decision-making arena when in the Kanlaon case, undue favour was given by the governing actors to the membership of a business corporation over local communities or other civil society members’ representation. Illegal forest activities were another significant issue addressed by the conservation measure. Results of strategies employed have exhibited some trend of burden distribution affecting and was affected by the legitimacy of its governance mechanism. For instance, penalties involved in forest law enforcement were observed to be stringent when applied to the forest-dependent people while lenient when people from both government and the business sectors were involved. This phenomenon was particularly prevalent in Sierra Madre as well as in the Kanlaon case which is again linked to their weak accountability system, aggravated by their respective historical context as well as the country’s notable patronage politics.

While these gross inequalities are a reflection of the inability of a forest governance mechanism to employ context-tailored innovations that promote a just allocation of benefits and burdens especially to the least advantaged peoples, the mechanism operates within a broader socio-political system as its institutional backdrop whose very nature also affects its performance.

3.2 Ecosystem Protection

With a mounting evidence that humans are exploiting forests at unsustainable rates in tropical regions (Gibson et al. 2000; FAO 2005; CIFOR 2011), measures to protect and rehabilitate what remains is highly called for if we want to sustain the essential ecological processes and the multiple goods and services that forests provide. There is
no common agreement about the most important factors causing deforestation, and therefore as Gibson et al. (2000) argue, there are multiple processes at work to address the problem or that significant knowledge gaps exist about these processes, or both.

The case studies illustrate that although in principle, a multi-stakeholder approach in conservation and development was commonly followed across the sites, in practice, the individual or collective strength or weakness of the governance features in the course of the operations had substantially influenced the mechanisms’ delivery of differing outcomes. The most deteriorating forest ecosystem was shown in the Sierra Madre case. It is interesting to note that it also had the governance mechanism that was weak in input legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination and resilience. While the Kanlaon case which presented some gains as well as losses in forest protection and rehabilitation, showed the waxing and waning of the necessary governance features. On the other hand, Kitanglad which had consistently showed strong point in all the necessary and contingent features had demonstrated an improved forest ecosystem.

Analysis of the three cases also supports the growing recognition that there are a myriad of linkages between effective conservation and environmental justice (Lynch 2010), and the demand for integrated thinking and strategies; failure to see that the two are interrelated has meant that “at times the environment and social justice movements have worked against each other, rather than working together” (Johnson et al. 2008 p.2). While multi-sectoral approaches are needed to reduce deforestation while meeting other development objectives (Minang et al. 2008), they are not enough. The results of the study have shown the importance of appreciating the complexity of the forest resources, the forest users, and the network society itself represented by the multiplicity of the actors involved. The findings have also indicated how all these and the fluidity of the relationships established affect the functioning of the governance mechanism employed, and thus demanding of innovative and adaptive ways for effective forest protection.

Logistical constraints can be turned into opportunities for governance innovation and improvement. Inadequate human and funding resources to carry out monitoring activities and other law enforcement strategies were identified as barriers in
addressing conservation goals in Sierra Madre given the exit of the international donors. While this contention is tenable especially given the role of scale in the country’s largest natural park, I regard the identified factors as rather a manifestation of a more fundamental governance issue which could have been mitigated with more creative ways that enhance cost-efficiency. Along this line, both the Kitanglad and the Kanlaon cases have demonstrated a strategy of employing forest guard volunteers which proved to be effective in significantly abating illegal logging, at the same time serving as a good cost-saving mechanism. While the involvement of forest volunteers was not completely wanting in the Sierra Madre case, its very low level of accountability could not create an environment conducive for its effective implementation. A combination of factors involving the state’s policy instruments, the government’s quest for economic growth, and the local communities’ desire to enhance their means of livelihood had provided the extractive activities an enabling condition.

3.3 Livelihood Protection

As the earlier discussions have pointed out, there is a direct link between forest protection and human security, or poverty reduction. One does not have to be reminded that forest ecosystem degradation undermines food production and the availability of clean water, and therefore threatening human livelihoods, health, and ultimately societal stability (Munang et al. 2011). Protecting livelihood increases the prospect of having more effective forest conservation strategy (Porter-Bolland et al. 2011; Walpole undated).

The Kitanglad case suggests that meeting both ecological and developmental objectives requires attention given to the other core value of distributive justice and finding governance strategies that are in consonance with it. As Guariguata has put it: “a forest put away behind fence and designated ‘protected’ doesn’t necessarily guarantee that canopy cover will be maintained over the long term compared to forests managed by local communities – in fact they lose much more’, arguing further that “after decades of expanding protected areas, the need to incorporate human rights concerns and equity into management objectives is now unquestioned” (in CIFOR, August 23, 2011 press release). The research findings have consistently shown that
the mechanism which neglected issues associated to distributive justice also reflected a low performance when it comes to the values of livelihood and ecosystem protection.

More often than not, forest governance mechanisms have segregated ecosystem protection and livelihood protection with separate approaches for forest protection and agriculture for example which appeared to be the mode followed in both the Sierra Madre and the Kanlaon cases. However, the reality in a developing country like the Philippines is populated landscapes where forests and farmland overlap and intersect. Giving this a due recognition like in the Kitanglad case can lead to a development of a governance pathway without segregated strategies at various levels, and would therefore be more context-tailored and responsive, with all relevant agencies strategically collaborating. This requires coordination and improvement of the communication channels among and between relevant state and non-state actors in the governance mechanism.

Attention given to environment protection tends to sacrifice developmental goals. This empirical investigation had demonstrated that such tendency can be avoided. In Sierra Madre where most members of the forest-dependent communities had claimed that there had been no protection of their main livelihood, nor a provision of an alternative one was provided along with the conservation mechanism, it is also the site where it has the worst forest depletion. On the other hand, in Kitanglad where there had been no big issue raised in relation to livelihood protection, it also performed best in terms of forest conservation.

In Kanlaon where efforts to protect the local communities’ source of livelihood had been wanting or weak, it was not due to the lack of awareness from the side of the governing actors about its significance on forest protection; nor is it attributed primarily to lack of funds. Like in the Sierra Madre case, the problem is more systemic, reflecting beyond value preferences among the governing actors overpowered by the broader socio-political milieu within which the mechanism steers. Such situation created tension and trade-off between environmental conservation and economic growth. As shown in the above Table, both Kanlaon and Sierra Madre case studies revealed that the government’s development priorities had been a powerful influence. With their respective governance mechanism’s
accountability being very weak, some actors were able to unduly advance their private interests in the name of development.

Examining governance issues relevant to livelihood protection makes us see its inescapable link with strategies aimed to promote distributive justice. Performance of these strategies based on the governance criteria and the way the latter interact with wider institutional arrangements determine outcomes on livelihood, as well as on the ecosystem dimension. When equity considerations, ecosystem protection, and economic needs are neglected, sustainability cannot also be expected.

3.4 Sustainability

Examining the cases, the Sierra Madre had major sustainability issues. Among the factors that had caused its governance mechanism to be problematic in this aspect include: heavy reliance on foreign-funding for support without integrating conservation and development efforts to local programs and priorities which had then meant later a ‘paralysis’ of key operations considering the absence of a substantial local institutional support; business profitability brought about by both corporate and illegal logging which had matched with the government’s quest for economic growth; and the local communities’ desire to protect their means of livelihood had undermined enforcement of regulations especially given that the mechanism had very weak accountability feature.

In the Kanlaon case, some attributes of the governance mechanism that were earlier working such as community participation, vibrant civil society, and discursive coordination, could have been viewed to be potentially enabling for sustainability. But like in Sierra Madre, when accountability was neglected or suppressed with the government’s bias for development, its resultant impact had weakened legitimacy adversely affecting sustainability. This was very well demonstrated by the geothermal operation inside the protected area’s ‘buffer zone’ and some associated blatant policy infringements. The prevailing tensions among features had spoiled the mechanism as a whole that it would seem to take a broader structural change more than just enhancement of processes, to have a socio-political context that facilitates the revival, improvement, and sustainability of the governance features that worked. The two
cases have indicated that traditional market and state institutions can reinforce disincentives for more sustainable behaviours; likewise, civil society institutions are faced with huge challenges in effectively promoting fundamental reforms of those institutions (Fischer et al. 2012).

On the other hand, the Kitanglad case had shown that the sustainability of the socio-ecological systems in the area which had so far contributed to the wellbeing of both forests and people is promising. While building on local knowledge and institutions had been an enabling factor, it was really the synergy of various governance features that facilitated the communicative nature of the interactions within the mechanism that shaped its functioning for relatively effective and lasting conservation and development strategies.

From the cases, we saw how sustainability was challenged by the seeming clash between forest protection and poverty reduction; between a priority given to either ecological conservation, or economic growth. Along with other defining features of good governance, legitimacy has an important role to play for sustainability. A crucial element that facilitates it is the deliberative nature of engagements in the governance processes making the latter more responsive to stakeholders’ values in both ecological and social terms, and therefore enabling for more sustainable outcomes.

The absence of a clear sustainability framework applied in conservation areas can lead to tolerance of approaches that often focus on short term effects at the cost of long term goal that is damaging for both forests and people. Such framework must aim for both livelihood and ecosystem protection, and address questions of justice. Some people claim that environmental governance often seems to involve tradeoffs between effectiveness and equity. In most complex environmental problems however, Biermann and colleagues state that this trade-off presents a ‘false dichotomy’ arguing that environmental problems are inherently political in nature which increases the need for democratic processes that allow actors to choose policies that they see as both equitable and effective (2011).
4 Concluding Remarks

Forest governance proceeds in the context of interdependent ecological and social systems. It becomes problematic when the actors’ differing and often competing interests and values produce tensions and tradeoffs that may impede sound decision-making. In a ‘pluralistic world’ with such increasing interdependence, what is argued to be “more feasible and attractive are workable agreements in which participants agree on a course of action, but for different reasons” (Dryzek 2000 p.170).

The interactions between the governing actors and the governed in the forest governance mechanism characterized to have legitimacy, accountability, efficiency, coordination (and resilience in situations with severe ecological problem) can produce outcomes in which benefits and burdens are justly shared, and people’s livelihoods and the forests are protected for a sustainable gain. The case study results demonstrate that innovative accountability measures facilitated by a coordinating governance mechanism that deliberates are more sensitive to issues of context and scale. As such, they provide high incentives for better sustainability performance.

All the necessary features have the capacity to be mutually reinforcing in supporting good forest governance. My analyses of the case studies pointed out some challenges encountered in the process of carrying out a conservation and development mechanism for a socio-ecological system. The latter is shaped by the interactions among actors having different interests and values with a potential to collide or converge which affects the different governance criteria consequently determining performance and outcomes. For example, the different agenda, priorities, and programs can become sources of tensions that create problems when they are ignored, rendering the mechanism self-defeating. Through deliberation and other discursive engagements, these tensions can however be strategized and turned into synergies needed for collective actions. That was the key message highlighted in the governance of Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park in Chapter 5. In the Northern Sierra Madre case in Chapter 4, I pointed out the drawback of a reliance on foreign-funding without local institution-building. On the other hand, the Kanlaon case in Chapter 6 demonstrated how a government’s notion of development and the way it values the latter can spoil the working of a governance mechanism, damaging the forests, and disadvantaging people.
The following chapter will elaborate these messages as it presents the case studies' lessons. It is followed by a discussion on the findings' theoretical and practical implications, before my research project's conclusions.
CHAPTER 8
LESSONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSIONS

1 Introduction

With mounting evidence on the critical role that it plays in determining societal wellbeing, governance has become a subject of increasing attention among researchers and practitioners in various fields. More often than not, the general literature on this topic associates governance principles, such as legitimacy and efficiency, with tensions, and practitioners seem to overemphasize the notion of tradeoffs involving the environment and development. It is important to acknowledge that there are often tradeoffs entailed in many environmental decisions made. Nevertheless, a more fundamental consideration is that a positive sum for ecological and human well-being is not something unattainable in environmental governance’s theory and practice. An orientation that sees compatibilities beyond conflicts facilitates creativity in collective actions for more effective environmental solutions.

In this study, I have sought to understand each of the criteria of good forest governance, namely: legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, coordination and resilience. While previous empirical investigations on environmental governance have focused on analyzing its principles, a contribution of this thesis lies in its emphasis to capture better the principles’ significance by examining their interactions with each other and how they individually or collectively influence the overall governance mechanism’s performance in addressing the core values to be maximized. Moreover, in order to answer my central question on what governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing, I have also taken steps in determining how an overall good forest governance looks like by understanding the interface between governance features and outcomes.

The comparative case analysis in the previous chapter supports the proposition that polycentric, collaborative, and discursive forest governance facilitates better performance in both ecological and social terms. This has been particularly reflected in the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park which has the most networked governance
mechanism among the three forest protected areas investigated. The following section provides take-home messages from the three cases. This chapter also seeks to draw out some implications of the research findings for the theories and practice of environmental governance guided by the following themes: Power and Discourse; Representation and Deliberation; as well as Context, Level, and Scale. Discussions on this and some recommendations are followed by a section that proposes the architecture of forest governance for both forests and people based on the lessons learned from the study. I then offer suggestions for further research before concluding the chapter.

2. Key Messages

Case 1. Donor-driven: When local realities take the backseat

In forest governance discourse among developing countries where people dwell in the forest or in its fringes, legitimacy is often expressed through concern for local participation and recognition of local institutions and knowledge. The case of the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park examined in chapter 4 has been particularly insightful when talking about a governance scenario where local realities take the backseat, and the initiatives are donor-driven. As this happens, it spoils the functioning and sustainability of the socio-ecological system.

A great number of the environment and development programs implemented in the developing countries are made possible with the funding support from foreign donors. Given this, I am more interested in finding out the diverse effect and its dynamics when global actors are involved, and the ways to overcome it. All the three protected areas covered in this research have received external funding. But a unique characteristic in the Sierra Madre case (Chapter 4) has been the expanse that it allowed the international actors to dominate. This is not something that is clear-cut however as the kind of dominance that we are dealing here is associated to what others call as ‘soft power’. Given its nature, it is often overlooked; its influence in shaping authoritative decisions must not however be taken lightly as the findings have revealed.
The Sierra Madre was the most highly-funded site; the indigenous peoples and other local communities have been represented in the policy-making body and they participated in relevant activities including decision-making and program implementation. So what is the problem? The nuances in the Sierra Madre’s mode of governing relative to the other cases spell its difference. Integration of local knowledge and institutions in the formal decision-making had been wanting or weak as they were overshadowed by the power that emanates from development aid. The governance mechanism failed to changeperspectives, rural lives, and landscapes for the better. Its weakness in allowing external mandates to subtly drive internal processes turned out to be self defeating.

The case indicates that the donors’ as well as the external implementers’ influence comes from its very nature; it intrinsically positions the locals to assume the role of ‘beneficiaries’ of their assistance. This relationship naturally creates an upward accountability system where the local recipients would tend to be more mindful of funding conditions and other external considerations rather than what they think are the best local decisions and actions. This was evident for instance in the implementing INGO’s priority on physical infrastructures which was very much a reflection of its organizational mandate; and as the case had shown, its failure in delivering the expected outcome of its other efforts such as the agroforestry project was also primary brought about by the inefficiency of the complex bureaucracy of theimplementing international organization within which it operates and to which it is deemed accountable.

Faced with a situation where ‘money talks’ in favour of an upward accountability, the challengefor the governing actors is to strike a balance among public discourses by developing a more systematized downward accountability through improved communication channels with local communities. With the latter’s sharpened understanding about what the interventions are for, and the roles that different actors are responsible for, they will learn to see themselves as partners rather than as beneficiaries; they become empowered and critical about decisions that affect them and therefore become more involved in shaping decisions and collective actions.

The Sierra Madre case has provided an insight especially relevant to situations where efforts to address environment and development objectives are carried out through
foreign-funded projects; these are countless in the developing world. Foreign funds per se are good; it is their unregulated power that produces bad results.

The donor agencies and the governing actors can counteract 'soft power' by investing more on 'soft projects' aiming to build capacities, such as the enhancement of local communicative processes and strategic integration of local knowledge with formal systems (Chapter 5); they can also mitigate its negative effect by helping reshape the discourse that puts them at a superior position; they can do so for example by avoiding or at least minimizing the introduction of the intervention with a 'project' nomenclature which from the perspective of local communities, can give rise to bureaucratic involvement in resource management and alienation from local interaction in terms of management responsibilities (see Giddens 1994 in Hanna et al. 1996). It can rather be effectively presented as an approach or strategy where areas for collaboration with the locals will be developed; otherwise, what could be cooperative and symbiotic relations are transformed into competitive and 'positional' relationships, in which some social conditions conducive to collective action—solidarity, trust, and equity—are eroded (Hirsch 1976 in Hanna et al. 1996 p. 47). The introduction of external funding can have the unintended consequence of deflecting energies previously devoted to cooperation into competition among actors in budget-constrained communities. As this happens, accountability is weakened which consequently undermines the legitimacy of the governance mechanism, adversely affecting the latter's capacity.

Case 2. Networked: Turning tensions into synergies for collective actions

The case of the Mt. Kitanglad Range Natural Park (Chapter 5) has particularly demonstrated that the synergy across the forest governance criteria has promoted both ecological and human wellbeing. It has performed relatively better compared to the other two cases on all features (i.e. legitimacy, accountability, efficiency, coordination, and resilience) whose interplay has facilitated the mechanism's effectiveness in relation to the core values aimed to be maximized for both forests and people. The result does not necessary imply the absence of tensions. But the tensions evident in the case were not directly involving the clashing of criteria; rather they stem from the following: diversity of actors, differing institutional mandates, and
often competing priorities; overlapping management rights; and the conservation’s adverse effects on forest-dependent communities’ income brought about by the limited access and use of the resource.

The criteria have the potential to compete. But this would likely happen only when the above mentioned tensions of differences in priorities, among others, are not resolved. Unless it is clear to the governing actors that those tensions reflect first and foremost a pluralism of values and interests, resolutions can be unduly perceived as highly problematic which primarily lies on the governance structure; in situations like this, strategies that are often resorted to relate to change in ‘institutional hardware’. Reform in institutional arrangements or establishing a new one are at times desirable in creating a more enabling atmosphere in resolving conflicts; it is not however the most decisive in producing the desired outcomes. The Mt. Kitanglad case revealed that neither is it essential in most instances. Rather, what proved to be more viable is the shaping of discourses or what Dryzek calls ‘institutional software’ that puts relevance to the ‘institutional hardware’ that is introduced (1996 p.104).

While tensions exist among various interests, points of convergence based on universal principles and values are also recognizable in a political arena. Operating under this premise, the Mt. Kitanglad case had demonstrated that the mechanism’s most effective devise in clarifying rules and roles, as well as in harmonizing views and values had been coordination and engagement of discourses. This proved to be crucial in either challenging or supporting an institutional status quo in finding ways for a more effective performance. In particular, a negotiating tool employing deliberation among governing actors had helped resolved overlapping management domains and rights of the protected area. On the other hand, collaborative dialogues and deliberations had facilitated a deepened understanding on common interests; they led to some resolutions of earlier tensions involving livelihood concerns for example, broadened the communities’ appreciation of the environment-development link and its impact on themselves and on others, and had driven them to be more innovative in their local solutions and other collective actions.

A relevant strategy employed which turned out to be a significant factor contributing to successful outcomes and sustainability in the area was building on local structures and institutions, high recognition of traditional knowledge and expertise, and
integration of indigenous and local culture to broader management structures facilitating culture-sensitive policies and practices. ‘Traditional knowledge’ as used here refers to the “knowledge, innovations, and practices of indigenous and local communities, developed and shared through experience gained over time and adapted to the local social structure, culture and environment” (UN Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 8 (j), 2007 in Figueroa 2011 pp.237-238). This and other types of information are better captured by communicative coordination. As the case had shown, an awareness of the importance of communication was manifested on the governance mechanism’s strong investment on approaches such as consultations, dialogues, and deliberations — while networked governance is more conducive for these forms of communication, the findings from this research project had pointed out that it is the quality of the latter and the capacity of the actors and the structures to produce them which primarily determine the success of networked governance in the context of environmental decision-making for ecological and human wellbeing.

Case 3. State-centric: Development and sustainability question

When associated with economic growth, development has generally been long perceived as being in conflict with the environment. The importance of economic growth cannot however be underestimated; in the 2011 UN Millennium Development Goals Report for instance, the highlighted development successes were attributed in part to the continued economic growth in some developing countries.

In chapter 6, the case of the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park supported the contention that as soon as the development priorities of the state kick in, effective forest governance is lost. It is in the environment — economic growth dynamics that the dilemma is evident both in theory and in practice. In the case examined, the geothermal power project required the construction of dams that altered the protected area’s buffer zone, with striking negative impacts on the physical environment of the forest ecosystem. On the other hand, one can imagine a scenario in which electricity shortage is a pressing concern. Environment is for the human wellbeing; so is development; and the geothermal power project could (if not in this case) benefit both environment and wellbeing.
How then are we going to address the critical nexus of socio-economic security and environmental sustainability? In the African contexts for example, many governments now view bio-fuels as having the potential to increase agricultural productivity and export thus strengthening their national economies, at the same time help in the climate change mitigation through reduction of green house gas emissions. Escalating uncertainties however challenge this scenario. The same can be said with regards to the failing attempt in the Kanlaon case.

Paradigms had evolved consistent to the call of synergizing environmental conservation with economic development: from ‘sustainable development’ in the 70s (see Dryzek 1997); ‘ecological modernization’ in the 80s, as well as ‘reflexive modernization’ in the 90s (Hajer 1995; Dryzek 1997); to the more recently popularized ‘green growth’, and ‘green economy’ discourses that have become buzz words in the UN system and more. While the earlier application of ecological modernization seems to be predominantly in the developed west, it has now been applied beyond it (Mol et al. 2009). On the other hand, green growth and green economy which reflect the ecological modernization’s basic tenets have started to make a way into the global south and the developing countries. In the 2005 Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific an agreement was made on green growth as strategy for sustainable development (in which three years later the host country – South Korea declared its commitment in embracing a Low Carbon, Green Growth as the core of the Republic’s new vision). The year 2008 marked the UNEP-led launching of the Green Economy Initiative. A common feature in all of these discourses is their compatibility with ‘sustainable development’, although starting from ‘ecological modernization’ they are more defined than the earlier notion of sustainable development in their approach that advocates technological innovation and/or beyond; and are more vocal about their view on the value of environmental protection for business profitability.

The foregoing discussion presents an inspiring development in terms of appreciation of some institution-changing discourses that put forward the notion of mutually reinforcing environment and development in the context of sustainability and progress. Now let’s examine its viability in a country like the Philippines. Drawing lessons from the findings of the thesis, I argue that there is a need to buttress the discourse on ‘synergies’ that can replace the prevailing ‘tradeoffs’ narrative in forest
governance discussions; understanding the link between deforestation and poverty, and the mutually supportive elements between forest protection and development are practically crucial in many tropical countries where agriculture is the mainstay of local economies; and given that degraded forests and insecure flows of forest ecosystems services can make communities and sectors more vulnerable to environmental change and lead to increased adaptation costs, this and many other important issues demand the governing (state and non-state global to local) actors to get rid of myopic lenses and take into account possibilities, risks, costs, prospects and gains in a more far-reaching fashion beyond the confines of their respective organizational directives.

Once again, insights drawn from Kanlaon, like the other two cases highlighted the value of communicative and reflexive engagements. As I have proposed in an earlier chapter, there is a need for the state to lessen if not let go of its command and control approach to be an effective member-facilitator of a well-functioning networked governance mechanism. Insistence on the status quo of its institutional practice can serve as a pillar of support to the production-orientated thrust of a capitalist economy like the Philippines. There may be institutional arrangements that need to be altered, but what looks more fundamental, more salient, and cost-effective than this, is the reshaping of ‘institutional software’ as a priority strategy over change of ‘institutional hardware’ in improving forest governance; if it is addressed first, then there is more likelihood that any ensuing structural reform that follows enjoys higher legitimacy.

The following section provides the main implications from the study’s findings, as well as some recommendations relevant to environmental governance theories and practice.

3. Implications and Recommendations

3.1 Power and Discourse

In this thesis, I have identified some influences in forest governance mechanisms which have the potential to either facilitate or impede good performance. These include but are not limited to overseas development grants, technocratic expertise, international organization’s mandates, and government bureaucracy. The influence of
actors associated with these spheres largely depends on the framing for their roles that have been reinforced by discourses. More often than not, they are unaware that the dynamics they are in can sacrifice the very objectives that they claim to address. They normally come into play based on legitimacy obtained through a supportive discourse; but it is worth noting that discourse that works to legitimize an action can also be used to undermine it.

The power of a discourse is supported in Dryzek’s notion of institutional design in which he views discourses as being intertwined with its institutions, arguing that the latter cannot operate without an associated and supportive discourse or discourses. He defines discourse as ‘a framework for apprehending the world embedded in language, enabling its adherents to put together diverse bits of sensory information into coherent wholes’, and suggests that it is best treated as ‘institutional software’ (or discursive software). ‘Institutional hardware’ on the other hand exists in the form of rules, rights, operating procedures, customs, and principles (Dryzek 1996 pp.103-105).

Power in environmental governance can be viewed by the extent to which its structures and processes shape individual or collective actions in the environmental domain. The ‘structures and processes’ mentioned are akin to Young’s ‘social institutions’ that are established and made operational, capable of resolving conflicts, facilitating cooperation, or, alleviating collective-action problems in a world of interdependent actors; in the way that it is being conceptualized here, there is no presupposition on the need to create material entities or organizations to administer the rules of the game that arise to handle the governance function (1994). Given that Young dismisses the idea of having an organization as a necessary condition for the rules of the game to be administered, there seems to be a latent recognition of another form of a powerful tool shaping individual or collective actions.

The politics of discourse as Hajer has put it, ‘is not about expressing power-resources in language but is about the actual creation of structures and fields of action by means of story-lines, positioning, and the selective employment of comprehensive discursive systems’ (1995 p.275). Determining the pathways through which a discourse has influence on the policy and politics of environmental issues is not straightforward. Drawing from this study, I can at least identify salience and ‘credibility’ as important
attributions that actors make whether their decisions and actions get affected in response to a dominant discourse. In the Sierra Madre case for instance, a discourse that viewed government officials who strictly enforced regulations against illegal logging as insensitive to the locals’ need for livelihoods had made many officials supportive of this destructive practice especially during their electoral campaigns (some went to the extent of passing a resolution supportive of constructing roads across the protected area in the name of development) with the hope of gaining the communities’ votes during the elections (although some tended to justify it claiming the sincerity of their concern for the local communities); in the case of Kanlaon, it demonstrated how a church-supported discourse on the environmental damage done by the geothermal project had moved civil society groups to protest against its continued operation which influenced decision-making at the empowered space; in Kitanglad on the other hand, the discourse that closely linked forest protection to the indigenous culture has significantly contributed to the successful campaign for the indigenous peoples’ support, turning them into active partners and prime movers in resource conservation.

Discourse as a form of power can have significant consequences. Both institutional software and hardware bring promises and perils to environmental governance; they can cut both ways. While a discourse may be used to better inform a discussion for a sound environmental decision-making for example, it has also the potential to be damaging, even more damaging than the institution with which it is associated. While the hardware provides the backdrop, it is this institutional software which has the greater power to influence, and therefore discourses also need to be altered if a negative influence potentially leading to an undesirable outcome is to be barred. Discourses can be a product of manipulation by people who frame the issue in a way that favours them at the expense of the forest ecosystem’s sustainability (e.g. that illegal logging is justified for local livelihoods). In a case like this, discourses are defended and can be used as instrument of state and business interests to gain public support, undermining the ability of the stakeholders at the public space to think critically on an intervention that is being implemented or introduced. In altering some damaging discourses, one can avoid the charge of discourse manipulation by providing an arena for deliberation characterized by a pluralism of inputs from among affected actors or their representatives.
How do we counteract a dominant discourse whose soft power produces an undesirable outcome? A strategy that addresses this seems to be essential to an effective functioning of an environmental governance mechanism for a good environmental performance. These soft powers can neglect or undermine scrutiny of approaches on how they would actually respond to both environment and development needs when the associated discourse presents incentive to gain with the continuity of the intervention supported by it. This presupposes that the actors’ values are aligned to the potential benefits involved. One may argue that it is natural for people to buttress a discourse that would render something beneficial for them. However, if the governing actors recognize a hegemonic discourse that embodies only one side of the two-pronged socio-ecological goal, that influence from it should be counteracted by addressing the knowledge gap and encouraging information flow which is better addressed by deliberation and other discursive engagements. Pathways through which reasoned information can emerge need to be explored in reshaping, balancing, or counteracting an existing one, thus influencing the policy and politics of environmental governance. Deliberation or other forms of discursive engagement involving state and non-state actors also serve to clarify big concepts that can at times dilute the nuances on the ground undermining both environmental and developmental objectives.

With the nature of donors’ and other international actors’ influence primarily coming from a ‘soft power’, it is hardly visible (and is manifested through other expressions instead such as priorities in the conservation and development project implementation which in the Sierra Madre case were more reflective of external mandates), and is permeable given the changing nature of discursive expressions. But its ‘permeability’ is a feature which can be brought into play in order to alter it into a desirable form; one way of doing this might be the use of counter discourse. This can be done for example through discursive engagements which were relatively better depicted by the protected areas’ governing actors in the Kitanglad and the Kanlaon cases, where local knowledge is proactively given a platform to get discussed and disseminated within a deliberative environmental governance system that links formal and informal political fields (i.e. networked governance mechanism with public space engaging with the authoritative space).
Any democratic environmental decision-making arena calls for representation of stakeholders’ interests and values; such is supposedly a minimum requirement for an empowered space in the process of obtaining legitimacy. Vieira and Runciman (2008 p.183-191) contend that “representation is an open-ended concept that is able to accommodate a wide range of different political visions, including long- as well as short-term political thinking. ...whatever solutions are to be found to the problems the world currently faces, they will have to involve representation in some form or other since there is no plausible form of politics in the modern world that can eschew the concept of representation altogether. We cannot do without representation if we are to assert our presence, and shape our environment collectively”.

As we recall the three cases discussed in Chapters 4-6, all have a multi-stakeholder governance and policy-making body (the PAMB) with membership of as many as 60 people representing sectors or organizations. The mixed results of their performance and outcomes however highlight the contentious nature of representation. As the Sierra Madre and the Kanlaon cases have demonstrated (Chapters 4 and 6), representation of persons or groups did not necessarily translate to voices of the representatives and consequently their constituents heard or incorporated in decision-making. This finding seems to undermine the ‘descriptive representation’ that Mansbridge puts forward giving emphasis on the virtue of shared experience in which ‘representatives are in their persons and lives in some sense typical of the larger class of persons whom they represent’ (1999 p.629). This more conventional representation of persons and groups as a way of employing a transformative participatory approach within a governance mechanism while having its benefits does not however guarantee adequate accommodation of interests and values. As indicated in the cases, there is a certain ‘politics’ involved that weaken descriptive representation’s representativeness as well as its transformative potential. Let us recall for instance the Sierra Madre and the Kanlaon cases.

During the time when there was sufficient representation of the indigenous peoples - the Agta, by their tribal leaders, their presence had resulted in both desirable and undesirable outcomes. While it facilitated the integration of their local knowledge and experience within the formal decision-making processes, it also became instrumental
in having some representatives’ information used by unscrupulous members of the governing body to reinforce illegal logging, a major issue that the forest governance mechanism was in the first place aiming to solve. In particular, the Agta’s familiarity with the local landscape and their knowledge of the locations where hardwood could be found became easily accessible to illegal loggers who were in conspiracy with others wearing the forest governing actors’ hat. And with the Agta’s need for income it was almost always irresistible for them to accept offers by their fellow ‘governing actors’ whose political and economic influence cannot be underestimated. Even the politics of seating arrangement in a PAMB meeting has the potential to silence an Agta representative when it characterized the latter as having an inferiority complex relative to the other members of a decision-making body displaying higher technocratic capability and social standing.

Moreover, granting that the adverse effect of a direct and descriptive representation of persons or groups was out of the picture, still, some pieces of evidence from the case pointed out that this kind of representation although advantageous in particular instances, is not always feasible. When there was financial deficiency such as the situation when the World Bank and the Dutch government-funded projects ended for example, it resulted to what was deemed necessary significant reduction of representatives of some tribal communities, as their continued presence in the formal decision-making arena had meant more budgetary costs which the local institutions cannot afford.

In Kanlaon on the other hand, the earlier representation of NGOs by the deliberating sectoral representatives in the governing body had indicated its importance in contesting and influencing some decisions leading the latter to be more reflective of public interest and its value on forest protection. While there were manifestations of accomplishment in this aspect, those positive signs did not thrive however and have in fact been weakened by the challenges encountered where the broader political system, like that in the Philippines within which the state-centric environmental governance mechanism operates is in many ways corrupt. The case had later demonstrated that when civil society representatives confront state representatives in a formal governing body, even if these state actors who have been working on the ground could empathize a public clamour opposing a particular decision, they could
not simply change their position if that decision has been approved and supported by higher rank officials; their minds maybe free to think but their hands seemed ‘tied’.

Given the state-centric set up (and that even other actors within the state are perceived powerless to oppose any irregularity linked to a directive that has come from those above their ranks), contestations by the non-state actors will have little impact within the empowered space, and so the better alternative was to freely express their voices through the public space. Moreover, the much favoured undue accommodation of the EDC (geothermal power company) within the governing body speaks a lot about government’s priority on development objective over anything else. Having perceived themselves to be at a losing end within the mechanism, they might as well not waste their time inside if there is a more useful venue outside.

But then again, as the Kitanglad case had shown, there is a potential for significant benefit if non-state actors are also meaningfully represented in the formal decision-making arena; and their voices are actually made part of or are represented in the empowered space (where the governance mechanism is rather polycentric in nature). When civil society groups are represented in the empowered space, opportunities for contestation and deliberation will have a higher likelihood to transform discourses into decisions or at least affect the latter for collective actions. And so for the non-state actors to become another centre of power having a relatively ‘equal footing’ as that of the traditionally dominating player (state actors) in terms of environmental decision-making, I suggested in the Kanlaon case (Chapter 6) that the state needs to let go or lessen its ‘command and control’ approach, enabling the non-conventional actors in the empowered space to meaningfully participate in the formal decision-making processes. As Hajer and Versteeg put it emphasizing the changing political field, “Solutions for pressing environmental problems cannot be found within the boundaries of the sovereign nation-state, forcing established institutions to take part in transnational networks of governance in which power is dispersed” (2005 p.182; see also Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Torgerson 2003). Applied in protected areas within a nation-state, there is no other better way for government actors to proceed than to blend with the non-state actors if they want their functions to be in tune with and more effective in the present socio-political current.
The foregoing discussions and the earlier chapters had pointed out some factors hindering the viability of descriptive representation. Some of these were the organizations’ financial resource limitation, constraint in the individual actors’ communication skills or language barrier, and the limiting effect of state dominance. Not all of these can however be addressed by a state’s response shifting its command and control approach to more of a facilitation role. Moreover, how are we going to deal with an argument put forward by some scholars that forms of representation generally “have to rely for their enduring hold on our politics, and on our imaginations, on the power of the state, which remains the definitive representative institution and is unlikely to give up its power easily, or without a struggle” (Vieira and Runciman 2008 p.191)? Granting that state dominance will continue to be the rule of the game in certain situations, are we left then with no other option in improving the quality of representation in cases where the state has become a hindering factor? How about those other factors other than the state, how can they be resolved? Along this line, it is important to look at exactly who/what is being represented. A closer examination of this issue will bring into light that what really matters is the representation of the stakeholders’ interests and values.

Implications of the study results suggest the prospect of representing discourses to be more enabling and encompassing in terms of improving substantial representation, that is, representation of interests. A discourse is conceptualized as “a set of categories and concepts embodying specific assumptions, judgments, contestations, dispositions, and capabilities”. Discursive representation is associated with theories of deliberative democracy that put emphasis on the “engagement of discourses in existing institutions of government and the broader public sphere, and those that ponder the design of deliberative institutions as part of the architecture of government” (Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008 p.481).

There are identified contexts in which ‘descriptive representation’ is viewed to be favourable for the disadvantaged groups (Mansbridge 1999). Even under these situations however, discursive representation seems to be decisive in enhancing representation of interests and values, and then complemented by the descriptive representation utilizing discourses in its reflexive engagements. In the context of representing the indigenous peoples for example, what determines its representativeness is not much about the fact that the representative is a tribal group
elder whose skin color and other physical attributes or life circumstances are akin to the peoples he represents. These are important and are often enabling factors but these do not guarantee effectiveness in transmitting views and values. What looks more critical in terms of influencing collective action is his capacity to articulate and put forward his tribe’s interests in decision-making processes through discourses. I then argue that while descriptive representation is contingent, discursive representation is a necessary condition, for how else can one capture interests and values better than through the discourses articulated by those who hold or support them? Furthermore, a danger in representing actors directly by personal or sectoral representatives is that it tends to erase the possible converging values among descriptive representatives which could have been enabling for collective actions and more sustainable outcomes. Thus, having the government to represent the interest of production, and the indigenous peoples to represent conservation might lead to impasse, showing the need for an alternative and more innovative way of representing.

Discursive representation has the potential to resolve some aforementioned constraining factors. It is relatively cost-efficient avoiding usual material costs entailed in representation of persons or groups. It can narrow or bridge the communications skills gap between and among descriptive representatives by giving prime consideration to discourses rather than the people supportive of them; and gives the responsibility to deliberate to those having competence to articulate them better, giving a relatively more equal footing to the discourses and interests represented. Specifying that the most articulate should represent discourses can create tension with the egalitarian aspect of democracy emphasizing that all people are equal and therefore deserve equal rights and opportunities. Discursive representation does not serve to undermine equality. Rather, it recognizes that there are basic disparities when it comes to actors’ capacities to influence decisions and collective actions which need to be addressed in a more creative way to advance the broader interests of the least advantaged in the society. Discursive representation is also more accommodating for the representation of nature and of the future generations which can best be depicted through discourses from among rational beings who value them. Moreover, it presents an innovative and strategic way of looking at how to shape and eventually reform an institutional design by prioritizing its institutional
'software' rather than its 'hardware' (which is made possible through a governance mechanism’s deliberative capacity).

The foregoing discussion indicates the important potential role of discursive representation. In the following section, I will try to sketch an environmental governance architecture that facilitates public goods in the forest-people domain. In particular, it proposes what might an institutional design look like which enhances the defining features of good forest governance promoting distributive justice, ecosystem protection, livelihood protection, and sustainability – core values for both ecological and human wellbeing.

4. Forest Governance Architecture for Ecological and Human Wellbeing

Lessons from this study have pointed out networked governance as a more desirable mode, enabling better performance in both ecological and social terms. Associated with relatively novel institutional arrangements that shift focus from linear lines of authoritative command giving paramount status to the sovereign state, to the more complex social interactions among actors within and beyond the state in policy processes (Torgerson 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003), the feasibility and effectiveness of this form of governance require further examination (see Graham et al. 2003; UNEP 2012). Analyses of the findings suggest that effective networked governance that works for both forests and people is one that is polycentric, collaborative, and discursive operating in a deliberative system.

In order for polycentricity to be a viable option, it necessitates coordination across different centres of polycentric governance. Here, ‘de-centering’ of power held by a central actor (traditionally by the state in a liberal democratic context) is not limited to decentralization closely associated with devolution of authority by the central to the local governments; from top to downward levels. Instead, this mechanism reflects power that is spread to different nodes, be they at the higher or lower levels. In the context of forest conservation where government is involved, it therefore entails that the latter is among the many centres; there is power sharing among state and non-state actors facilitated through coordination.
A collaborative mechanism employs communication and discourse as its tool and deliberation as its central process. This attribute is essential for polycentricity to work since such a deliberative practice is more context-oriented than one which is not and is therefore relatively sensitive to the governance underpinnings. Along this line, discursive representation is an important feature of the architecture of polycentric and collaborative environmental governance that works for forests and people. As it enhances substantial representation, it addresses accountability issue which becomes a pressing problem as the distance between the represented and representative widens - a situation more typical in networks. The notion of discursive representation helps in drawing attention to the often overlooked institutional software in whose function the operation of the institutional hardware relies (Dryzek 1996).

The following figure (Figure 6) is a proposed model illustrating what a polycentric and discursive networked governance might look like in practice as it operates within a deliberative system in the context of protected areas in particular, or the environment domain in general. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, no specific mode of governance is a panacea for environmental protection. Results of this study however reveal that the now growing networked governance is more enabling for its mechanism to work for both forests and people, provided however that it is polycentric, collaborative, and discursive in nature. The polycentricity of its architecture exhibits diverse actors and multiple sources of power obtained from the different discourses they promote and the institutions to which these discourses are embedded. These different centres of influence are then being ‘networked’ through discursive engagements and collaboration to produce collective actions.
In this illustration, I am taking on Dryzek’s conceptualization of a deliberative system that covers settings that are not exclusive to a particular kind of institution, such as a state; a commitment to the building of formal institutions is neither entailed in it. The systemic view however emphasizes the importance of tracing the connections between relevant processes and the production of collective outcomes (see Dryzek 2011 pp.225-232). Applied in environmental governance, this system has the following elements: public space, empowered space, bridging institution, transmission and accountability, and decisiveness of its features in determining collections actions.
I assume the public space as having diverse discursive nodes which include among others deliberative processes. An empowered space on the other hand can be constituted by state and/or non-state actors in the broader setting, employing deliberative modes of governance in coming up with authoritative decisions. While I recognize deliberation as an essential part of both the public and empowered spaces and that there must be a 'critical distance' between them, I put forward the idea of a bridging institution as another element in addition to Dryzek’s components of the system (2011 p.225-226) to underscore the value of a mechanism needed for a more strategic transmission of public interests and opinions to the empowered space. This added feature which advocates discursive representation is also meant to enhance the discursive accountability needed in a deliberative environmental governance system. The following elaborates the above template in the context of networked governance.

_Transmission channels in a two-pronged deliberative system._ As this networked governance operates, deliberative avenues can be found in both public and empowered spaces in a deliberative system. Parallel to the civil society’s presence in the public space is its representation at the empowered space. There is no well defined boundary between state and non-state actors especially at this space where both constitute the governing and policy-making body (such as in the case of the Protected Area Management Board which is usually composed of representatives from national government agencies, local government units, indigenous peoples, NGOs, and the business sector when needed). While this kind of set-up runs the risk of undermining the non-state actors’ critical distance that is important in raising the accountability at the empowered space, it is however strategically facilitative of transmission channels where public interests can be more easily and sustainably integrated in authoritative decisions influencing collective outcomes.

It was indicated in the thesis findings that for an empowered space to be more conducive for non-state actors’ representation, legitimacy of the governance mechanism is required. Given this, it is more reasonable to keep the civil society at the public space active and discursively engaging since it has an inherent advantage in its accountability-enhancing role and can then likely contribute in improving the legitimacy, and hopefully, performance of the overall governance mechanism. Moreover, the crucial role of a vibrant civil society in the public space can serve to counter the risk associated with a situation where a ‘critical distance’ seems to get...
undermined when non-state actors formally engage with state actors at the empowered space.

Civil Society's Challenge. In Chapter 6, I highlighted the civil society’s autonomy from the government to be aptly putting it in a more credible position as government ‘watchdogs’. Having said that, it is however important to wear a critical hat in one’s views of civil society. A vibrant one has the ability to express a plurality of values especially including those undermined by the state or market, in a more or less unconstrained manner (acting as political pressure group, putting forward their advocacy, or challenging the socio-political system through various means of expressions such as lobbying, dialogues, protests, boycotts among others). However, civil societies occupying the public space at times struggle to be purely so. The geothermal plant operation in Kanlaon for instance is a case in point where cooptation was evident. On one hand you have a church-led group of 10,000 people protesting against it. On the other hand, there were also segments in the civil society like some electric cooperatives and other NGOs supportive of it resulting from the business operator’s effort to convince them using the discourse of the gravity of electric shortage in the area and boasting about its project as a showcase for ‘sustainable development’ through the use of the media. Cooptation was also evident in the Sierra Madre case when some members of the local communities including the indigenous peoples were in conspiracy with illegal loggers who used the discourse of ‘job generation and livelihoods’ with the goal of continuing forest exploitation. While these loggers and the associated business groups had embraced the local discourse of livelihood and rearticulated it through the media, it had the subtle effect of undermining the discourse of forest protection, paving a way to put forward and prioritize economic agenda.

Communication distortion at the public space is not the only issue that challenges civil society’s capacity to genuinely influence policy making. Another one is more associated with the broader political system within which it operates as it gets involved in the empowered space. While this may sound overwhelming, addressing the issue in a cost-effective way can be done by managing discourses which either help or hinder the institutional operations of the political system. This is facilitated by employing deliberative and other discursive processes that can lead to a promotion, or a weakening of an institution-enabling discourse or discourses. As the Sierra Madre
and the Kanlaon cases had demonstrated, the country’s priority on economic growth was matched with an intimate relationship between the state and business sector which overshadowed the civil society’s attempt to put forward other relevant interests in the formal decision-making arena. The ensuing tension with broader socio-political realities had led to some ‘maneuvering’ of the state’s institutional arrangements to accommodate its interests. This had primarily been through the use of discourses such as ‘raising of revenues’ as a justification tolerating illegal logging for instance; or allowing the geothermal plant operation to infringe a law in the name of ‘sustainable development’. This signifies the structural power of business interests reinforced by discourses whose influence in shaping wanted or unwanted outcomes is even made more pronounced given the possibility that a particular discourse can provide cover for an interest. Accommodating different discourses in a relatively the same footing is then plausible through discursive representation.

**Discursive representation.** As shown in the figure, what I particularly emphasized in the notion of public space are not the actors or sectors themselves but the interests and values that they hold, represented by discourses which are formed not exclusively by civil society members but through the dynamic interactions between non-state and state actors. This presupposes that discourses put forward in the public space inevitably reflect different shades of interests shared within and/or among individuals regardless of their sectoral affiliation. It is then less reasonable if representation is anchored on persons or sectors than basing it on discourses that aptly capture the heterogeneous nature of interests. Applied in the developing world’s protected area setting, the illustration depicts two clusters of discourses showing how some values can be commonly intertwined in another value. It is not surprising for example if those who promote economic growth also advocate livelihood protection and poverty reduction; and that those who consider ecosystem protection as a priority also uphold the latter two. Even with the possibility of clashing priorities, one seems to always find a basic element that unites (such as ‘quality of life’ for example where values on livelihood and poverty reduction seem to be rooted).

Discursive representation can have a significant role in turning tensions into synergies for collective actions. Although it is not necessarily deliberative, its discursive nature and any associated deliberation employed at any stage (such as in generating the discourses being represented, or in transmitting them) have the potential to recognize
some universal values and principles held by different actors. Such potential is
easily seen especially given that an emphasis in discursive communication facilitates
deepen understanding of fundamental bases of individuals’ preferences which can
shed light on more universal principles upon which they are anchored.

Moreover, by representing discourses, giving an undue advantage to an already
relatively more ‘influential’ person or sector in a deliberative arena can be more
effectively avoided as it attempts to address the issue of stakeholders’ difference in
terms of communication competence which is prevalent in the conventional way of
representing. Having identified the discourses to be represented earlier on, discursive
representation simplifies the process, and avoids blurring of interests brought about
by the complex nature of a human person who can associate himself or herself to
different values. Again, while in specific contexts ‘descriptive representation’ can be
highly called for, a more fundamental requirement is the representation of discourses.
So how can this be put in practice?

In the above prototype where a multi-sectoral board is taking the governing
responsibility which typifies many conservation mechanisms these days, I suggest
that the deliberating actors represent and engage discourses as a central part of policy
and decision-making process. Representatives of each relevant discourse in this
particular setting can be chosen. (The selection can be done by the secretariat from
among the incumbent members of an authoritative body like the PAMB for instance,
but preferably from among individuals closely associated with the public space who
meet the criteria set out by the body.) Choosing options may largely depend on the
objectives of the deliberation and the material resources available but basic
considerations ideally include the strength of one’s support to the discourse to be
represented as well as, communicative competence as minimum requirement).
Nevertheless, official member institutions at the empowered space constituting the
multi-sectoral policy decision-makers and implementers will need to be represented
as audience members (granting they are not the deliberating individuals themselves)
whose relationship with the latter has to be reflexive as they are expected to come up
with ‘workable agreements’ for collective actions compatible to the recommendations
from the deliberative forum. In this particular instance, we see the value of having the
authorized representatives of the governance mechanism (government and non-
government collaboration), but unlike many existing state-non state decision-making
bodies in networked environmental governance setting, the number of persons representing can be significantly minimized.

*Bridging institution.* Another important device to operationalize discursive representation is having an ‘actor’ responsible in mapping the discourses from the public space. In the cases examined, this can mean improving the role of the board secretariat into a functional bridging institution in the interface of the discourse-holders and the policy-makers. In a way, the PAMB secretariats in the cases examined have partly assumed this role already when they conducted research work in preparation for every policy meeting, at the same time acting as a de facto evaluation and monitoring arm of the governance body. What I envisage as bridging institution will serve as a support unit which researches, maps, and articulates the differing discourses (both dominant and marginal) relevant to the policy issue under consideration and transmits them to the empowered space where deliberation is hosted. The same unit can function to feed back to the public the results of the deliberation vis-a-vis the decisions and actions taken by the relevant authoritative organizations. It may also be in a good position to identify and recommend prospective discursive representatives or they can be the discursive representatives themselves with the policy-makers as the audience members. A lead person in this bridging institution can be a potential moderator among the deliberating actors.

Going back to the premise that the system as envisioned here is not committed to the establishment of formal institutions, the empowered space can employ a loosely-structured or even an informal deliberation. In situations like this, the bridging institution does not disappear. Its relevance is in fact increased, yet with its bridging function, it remains distinct from the empowered space. The rigour it invests in generating differing discourses from the public space is more appreciated and may compensate a weakness entailed in the nature of the deliberative process. Consider for instance the secretariat of a regional forest network acting as bridging institution that uses ‘community resource mapping and accounting’ in teasing out the discourses of different tribal groups, upland and coastal communities relevant to a watershed under consideration. The community map that was produced reflecting the local discourses was overlaid on the technical map from the relevant state agency showing how the government makes sense of the ecosystem landscape under consideration in relation to their plans and programs. Out of this, a geographical at the same time, an issue
map was produced which comprehensively captured the differing and often competing discourses. This map became a powerful transmission tool when presented to the empowered space and served to facilitate effective dialogues involving policymakers and forest dwellers or affected farmers. There was no formal deliberation as conceptualized in many existing discussions in the literature about a deliberative system; the discursive representation provided by the map coupled with the discursive engagements employed by the bridging institution however directly influenced collective decisions and actions.

A ‘bridging institution’ can be taken as an alternative to the notion of ‘chamber of discourses’ (see Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008). Although the latter is also welcoming of a more informal chamber, it seems to suggest that a formal structure at the empowered space is closely linked to a formal deliberative forum. On the other hand, the bridging institution and its role in discursive representation is applicable in various settings (formal or informal structure, public or empowered space); and more often, its rule of conduct is informal or semi-formal. It can easily complement existing institutional arrangements even those adamant in sticking to the ‘sovereign state’, or to one which would rather keep a ‘critical distance’ from the empowered space. It is discernable in many ongoing environmental governance mechanisms whether they be in mega cities in the ‘west’ or in remote areas in the developing world.

A bridging institution is embodied for example by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)- steered Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG), an alliance covering ten forest hotspot countries across Africa and Asia which has been working since 2003 on ways ‘to shift power over forests towards those who enable and pursue sustainable forest-linked livelihoods’. Teams in each of these countries have been employing discursive processes as ‘they work to connect people marginalised from forest governance to those controlling it, and push for better decisions’. They promote ‘building key bridges, and not quick fixes...’ In Cameroon for instance, its team has facilitated the revision of a crucial government order in favour of local communities; in Tanzania, it installed key principles of rights and benefit sharing in emerging REDD+ strategies; and in India, it has convinced high-level players that the Forest Rights Act be made to work (IIED 2011). This kind
of function has also been performed by the Asia Forest Network (AFN) as it connects forest-dwelling communities' discourses in government agencies' plans and programs through dialogues, cross-visits, and other innovative ways such as the use of geographical and issue maps.

Furthermore, the bridging institution has the potential to downgrade elitist structures or procedures, and with its relative flexibility it avoids erasing cultural differentiation and heterogeneity. It can therefore be a home for governing actors belonging to more conservative societies for example where the discursive nature of women is more evident in informal settings than in male-dominated formal deliberative forums (without necessarily undermining the broader transformative nature of its process). It is therefore more inclusive in practice. The relevance of a 'bridging institution' is also acknowledged in the literature as it is akin to what other scholars term as boundary or bridging organization (see for example Cash et al. 2006; Clark et al. 2011) framing it as that which mediates differences inherent in conflicting perceptions and interests as it plays an intermediary role between different arenas, levels, or scales and facilitate the co-production of knowledge (Cash et al. 2006) in the interface between science and policy for instance (Clark et al. 2011). When analyzed in relation to discursive representation, this organization serves as instrument in distilling discourses and improving transmission; it may or may not be officially attached to the empowered space, and like many NGOs or other private organizations partnering with the government, it may 'come and go' but its effectiveness in transmitting discourses relies much on its salience and credibility.

The bridging institution as conceptualized can be viewed both as an arena of discursive representation and a tool for transmission. The discursive engagements which encompass both the empowered and the public spaces also contribute in widening the permeability of the deliberative system entailed in the broadened ‘networking’ which can increase the fluidity of interactions while facilitating some informal accountability-enhancing innovations.

While this framing of an environmental governance system broadly reflects a combination of some features from Dryzek’s (2009) and Hendriks’(2006) notions of a deliberative system, compared to Dryzek’s, it broadens the role of non-state actors beyond the public space which he emphasized as the locus of production and
engagement of discourses (2008). While it supports Hendrik’s idea of an ‘integrated deliberative system’, it particularly puts forward the representation of discourses (Dryzek and Niemeyer 2008) in the deliberative forums as a preferred option over representation of actors or groups which seems implicit in Hendrik’s proposition when she argues about the willingness of the deliberative participants (2006 p.500-5001). It regards discursive representation as essential, and descriptive representation as contingent.

I argue that discursive representation has the potential to resolve some issues that one encounters in the world of theories and practice. It responds to the problem associated with public participation that is closely tied to the vague nature of civil society (see Hendriks 2006). It makes one think beyond the ‘who’ question to the ‘what’ and therefore has the potential to be more inclusive as it pays better attention to substance more than its form (e.g. interest itself, rather than the one holding the interest). It is then attuned to those advocating for a representation of nature or of the future generation. It recognizes the complexity of human individuals (or an organization) and points out that a more practical alternative to capture them is through different discourses that are treated separately (this is simpler but not necessarily simplistic); representation is more crystallized. It can mitigate the downside and limitations (experienced by civil society representatives within formal decision-making bodies like those involving the state) brought about by the broader political and economic structures within which they operate as demonstrated for example in the Kanlaon case (Chapter 6). And it can address logistical and material constraints rendering the infeasibility of face to face participation and descriptive representation as the Sierra Madre case (Chapter 4) has shown us. This too will have implications on the issue of distributive justice in various levels and scales of environmental governance.

In sum, I recognize that a public-private presence in a governance mechanism may not always materialize since an empowered space may be officially occupied by the government alone. However, I promote a polycentric, collaborative, and discursive networked governance consisting of state and non-state actors within a deliberative system, particularly in the environment domain. Along this line, it is not hard to see the viability of a discursive engagement to be two-pronged, that is, a parallel existence of deliberative avenues for the civil society in both public and empowered spaces expressed through different modes within the system. Both aim to influence the
state, but the civil society’s institutionalized discursive amalgamation with the latter in the empowered space creates a higher potential for transmission that can lead to more legitimate, just, and effective collective actions.

4.1. Advancing a Just and Sustainable Society

The objective in trying to examine what forest governance features and system promote both ecological and human wellbeing is closely connected to finding ways to advance a just and sustainable society. While a key message highlighted in the case studies is the importance of the discursive and deliberative aspects of engagements, it also points out that certain dominant discourses have prime bearers (like a liberal state for ‘economic growth’); an emphasis of which in both theory and practice gives growth a higher position over sustainability or equity issues. State’s bias on economic growth undermines the latter. As the Sierra Madre and the Kanlaon cases have indicated, a state-centric governance mechanism despite its effort to conform to the sustainable development paradigm, finds it hard to keep a balance.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is an increasing call to synergize environmental conservation with economic development. Among the popular discourses these days in response to that is the ‘green growth’ and ‘green economy’. Critics are however fast to show that these discourses seem to treat the world as a ‘single unit’, that what is good for some is the same as that of others, which therefore tends to undermine social equity in the equation, and undermine sustainability in the long run. Surely, there are countless reasons behind the production objective, but taking into account that land and natural resources are not increasing, there is definitely an important ground to rethink the frameworks that are currently applied. There is a need to be more accommodating of other ways of thinking about what constitutes wellbeing or a good lifesuch as those in tune with the language of indigenous peoples whose traditional ways of living are in many ways hindered by the current economic system in which the health of the markets are prioritized over human and ecological health (see Rawls 1985 on the plurality of conceptions of the good). Unless equity and justice considerations are factored in, it seems unlikely that ‘modernization’ can avoid being ecologically predatory and culturally alienating.
Moreover, if issues on equity are not addressed, there will be trust erosion that can block collective actions.

The envisaged polycentric, collaborative, and discursive environmental governance is more compatible with treating the world as ‘plural’, thus recognizing the many other values and aspirations of other people beyond ‘economic growth’. One strategy seems to be for the status quo’s institutional arrangements with their growth orientation in a capitalist system to loosen its grip in controlling society’s decisions and collective actions and allowing people to think what to them within their context can better address ecological protection and wealth. Development is a plural concept representing the quality of life. While it refers primarily to growth for the business sector, and comrades, it may mean ‘simple life’ for some which connotes more the preservation of nature, less exploitation, and production and so perhaps less economic growth, but envisaging a sustainable future with more satisfied people. This is also consistent with ideas about ‘comprehensive wealth’ or ‘inclusive wealth’ (see Dasgupta 2009; and Arrow et al. 2003 respectively).

Furthermore, while one can argue that green economy is a strategy that is aimed to close the gap between economic growth and environment protection through technological innovation, the empirical world had shown that advancement in technology for a green economy has benefited some sectors of the society while jeopardizing others (e.g. land grabbing in Africa triggered by growth in other countries, and for the sake of green growth). This is precisely happening due to overemphasis in ‘growth’ with ‘greening’ serving as a facade, which muddles the very foundation of sustainable development, subtly removing the issue of equity in the equation. This again points to the fact that we live in a pluralistic world and therefore it should be treated as such if our common aim is to have a sustainable and just society (or at least one that is closer to it).

Another reminder that we can draw from the findings is that what constitutes wellbeing is not only growth. As the Sierra Madre and the Kanlaon cases have shown, resource exploitation in the name of ‘growth’ benefited some through profits while damaging others. The notion of development for human wellbeing may differ for different people. If we want to be strategic in not eclipsing equity issues from the equation while at the same time accommodating broader global goals, the better form
of governance that can respond to this seems to be one that is polycentric, collaborative, and discursive. This governance system is inclusive of both those who see the value of growth through technological advancement as desirable for development and those whose notion of the latter is associated with preserving nature and culture.

Despite the dominance of liberal capitalist economies in today’s world, some of us aspire a less capitalistic and more people-centred development. The promotion of polycentric, collaborative, and discursive environmental governance in a deliberative system as a step that moves towards that direction is worth exploring. With more emphasis given to discourses representing the plurality of interests and their interdependence at various levels and scales, it is likely that an emergence of a counter-discourse to ‘growth’ can help shape or eventually transform institutions that are enabling for collective actions geared towards a more balanced, just, and sustainable life.

5. Limitations of the Study

The methodology employed in this study has some limitations which I duly recognize. This project is basically a qualitative research. An important assumption that is made here is on the inherently contextual nature of knowledge. With the qualitative research’s special interest in meanings, perspectives, and processes, it requires my interpretation. This unavoidable need for interpretation can be perceived as a weakness given its vulnerability to the investigator’s bias. But as Scharpf (1978 p.349) has aptly put it, “the hermeneutic reconstruction of social problems cannot be achieved through purely empirical research operations in any case”, and so my judgements as researcher are unavoidable.

Also, the three case studies that I have chosen do not represent a sample. As already mentioned in Chapter 3 on ‘Methodology’, their goal is more of expanding and generalizing theories, rather than enumerating statistical generalization (see Yin 1999; Barbour 2008). Employing a comparative analysis of the cases has then added its value, as it fosters the link between the historian’s ‘what-questions’ to the political
scientist’s ‘why questions’ (Rhodes 1997 pp.82-83). An important caveat is that the generalizations apply only under certain specified conditions and are derived from analyzing and comparing the different cases in terms of common theoretical concepts while simultaneously placing their diversity in a theoretical perspective.

With regards to the analytical framework that was used, the indicators were generally pre-determined and tailored to a developing country setting, but the open-ended nature of the relevant questions that were formulated to facilitate accessing of knowledge has provided the flexibility needed to elicit pieces of information that directly respond to questions on the ‘governance criteria’ and ‘core values’.

6. Future Research

The theory of deliberative democracy and its propositions were found helpful in analyzing the findings from my empirical investigation. Recall that before and during my fieldwork, I approached this study without consciously making use of deliberative democracy as my analytical frame. The field data that were gathered however pointed out that deliberative democracy is among the best available theories that could help me explain phenomena that are more reflective of the changing socio-political landscape in the context of environmental governance networks. It would then be valuable to carry out future research that zooms in and critically make an assessment of how deliberative processes or qualities specifically influence collective actions in environmental decision-making and how they can be sustained or scaled up. The following are two research areas that will be interesting to explore.

6.1 Bridging Institution in Forest Governance

In my thesis, I introduced ‘bridging institution’, conceptualized as a tool for discursive representation. As I have mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are institutional arrangements that have already been serving this purpose in the context of forest governance. An example I gave is the Forest Governance Learning Group (FGLG), an alliance that operates in forest hotspot countries across Asia and Africa as they work to connect the least advantaged people to the forest governing actors, pushing for better decisions for ecological and human wellbeing.
Among the relevant analytical problems to investigate relate to the issues of legitimacy, transmission, and effectiveness in influencing collective actions. As a non-state actor in networked governance, how does a bridging institution such as the FGLG build its legitimacy as it assumes the role of an agent in transmitting public interests through discourses at the empowered space? What are the factors that enhance transmission? I found in my research that the broader socio-political structure where a governance mechanism operates is another influential factor determining performance and outcome. If a bridging institution encounters this challenge, what are the strategies it employs in dealing with it? And how is its effectiveness manifested on the ground? For example, if its aim is to address the disconnect between forest sustainability and food security, what are the developments that can be attributed to the bridging institution’s work? Answers to these questions can contribute in the better understanding of the growing role and influence of actors beyond the state and its relationship with the latter in environmental decision-making. Moreover, it can also provide findings in which we can draw some lessons and conclusions on the role of discourses in collective actions.

6.2 Discursive representation and climate change adaptation

Discursive representation as a concept is relatively novel and remains contentious in the eyes of many scholars. However in practice, there seems to be little room to question its existence across political locations and its viability has been tested in many ways. In the global setting for instance, a web civil society movement like AVAAZ which aims “to bring people-powered politics to decision-making everywhere” has embodied discursive representation in a large scale. Suddeutsche Zeitung describes it as “a transnational community that is more democratic, and could be more effective, than the United Nations” (Avaaz 2012). With 15,000,000 members from 194 countries and is continuously growing, and more importantly, an impressive track record of actions and modes of transmissions, its legitimacy looks unquestionable. We observe relevant efforts from researchers and policy-makers trying to conceptualize environmental governance architectures at various levels which are closely tied to the sovereign states, employing the more familiar modes of representing. Drawing lessons from a more informal but practised pathways of
governance and applying them in the conceptualization of a more pragmatic and potentially effective environmental system seem to be wanting. It can then be of great value to study the notion of discursive representation amidst the backdrop of a deliberative system, focusing on one of the most pressing issues of our time – climate change in general, and climate change adaptation in particular.

Forest ecosystems have the potential to reduce the vulnerability of communities to climate change impacts by protecting settlements from natural hazards and supply interruptions and enhancing livelihoods and food security, while also playing an important role in the adaptation of national economic sectors. Increasingly aware of these threats, developing country governments and their international partners are turning to adaptations options in the development context. Moreover, there is a growing interest among industrialized countries and donor agencies to channel their billions into adaptation finance, including under the backing of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Emerging national, sectoral, and project-based adaptation plans and policies are however largely in their infancy and relatively untested (WRI, 2011). Scholars aver that polycentric governance contributes towards the global goal of climate change adaptation, with its approaches to institution-building and policy-making facilitative of experimentation and learning across multiple scales (Ostrom 2009; Ostrom 2010); its feature improving the fit between knowledge, action, and social-ecological systems in ways that allow societies to be more responsive and adaptive at appropriate levels (Lebel et al. 2006).

Adaptation is viewed as an underinvested area today in both research and institutional intervention for the climate change problem. Findings of my study imply that polycentric, collaborative, and discursive governance is enabling for adaptation, and points out that deliberation contributes to resilience. Is a deliberative system necessarily a more adaptive system? Drawing lessons from ‘discursive representation in practice’, it will be interesting to further research the role of this mode of representation in the institutional design of governance mechanisms for climate change adaptation in the context of a deliberative system. And if a discourse operationalizes institution, how does the latter help or hinder the strength of a discourse and what are the effects of this dynamics in the governance system where it occurs?
7. Concluding Remarks

The case studies highlighted the dilemma faced by a governance mechanism in balancing claims associated with both economic security and ecological sustainability. This is especially challenging in developing countries like the Philippines where a significant number of people live in poverty. The results have also shown that if issues on equity are not addressed, there will be trust erosion that can block crucial collective actions.

To recap, this thesis project found that legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency in decision-making, coordination, and resilience are mutually reinforcing in their performance as forest governance features promoting distributive justice, livelihood protection, ecosystem protection, and sustainability – the core values for ecological and human wellbeing. When faced with tensions and trade-offs, the deliberative nature of a networked governance mechanism is instrumental in turning these tensions into synergies for collective actions. A legitimacy deficit that is more common in governance networks can be addressed by a system that is conceptualized to employ discursive engagements in both the public and the empowered spaces, aided by a bridging institution in terms of transmission and accountability; and substantiated by discursive representation in cases when descriptive representation proves to be infeasible, limiting, and/or unjust. The overall analyses of the findings suggest that effective networked governance involving state and non-state actors that works for both forests and people is one that is polycentric, collaborative, and discursive operating in a deliberative system. This system of environmental governance also creates an enabling setting for a just and sustainable society to thrive.
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Appendix A. Interview Information Sheet*

Environmental Governance for Ecological and Human Wellbeing:  
Cases of Forest Protected Areas in the Philippines

By Maria Noelyn Dano

Supervisory Panel:  
Professor John Dryzek (RSSS, ANU), Professor Peter Kanowski (Fenner School, ANU)

This interview is being undertaken as part of my PhD Research at the Australian National University (ANU), under the primary supervision of Prof. John Dryzek. The central question is, “What governance features best promote both ecological and human wellbeing?” To answer this, a comparative case study will be carried out involving three forest protected areas in the Philippines, whereby governance mechanisms will be examined based on the following governance criteria: legitimacy, accountability, cost-efficiency, accountability, coordination, and resilience.

The objective of this interview is to seek your valuable knowledge and perceptions regarding the features of some structures and processes that govern the forest protected area. Responses from certain stakeholders will also be sought on the effects of these structures and processes to the forest dependent communities. Each interview will be carried for about an hour and half.

I will take notes of the answers/discussion. However, no individual information will be revealed in subsequent research thesis or any publications, unless in exceptional cases, it is deemed important, and a prior approval was given. You may refuse to answer certain questions, withdraw from the interview at any time, or request that any specific information is not to be used. In reports of the work, or any publication, names will not be revealed, only a general description of the participant (e.g. group or office affiliation), unless an explicit permission is obtained from them.

For any question and point of concern, feel free to communicate with me directly. Below are my Contact Details:

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This research operates under the research ethics protocol of the University, and any questions or complaints can also be forwarded to the Human Ethics Committee below:

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Thank you for your support. Just let me know if you would be interested in receiving any summaries of the research once it is completed.

*A printed copy of this page (with Tagalog, and Visayan translations for areas where applicable) will be read to respondents before the interview begins.
Appendix B. Oral Consent Script*

(To be translated into Tagalog or Visayan language when deemed appropriate)

1. I have read out the information sheet about my research, “Environmental Governance for Ecological and Human Wellbeing”. Did I make everything clear? Do you want to ask me any questions about the project?

2. I will keep all the information you give me in this interview confidential. Any notes or recordings from this interview will be kept in a secured place. I will not share your personal details with anyone else. Is that fine?

3. Some of the information from this interview may be published. However, your real name will not be used in relation to any of the information you have provided me, unless approval from you was obtained. Would that be okay to you?

4. You should know that even though I will not normally include your identity information in any publication, I may include your statement in the publication. Before I publish any of your specific statements or views, I will give you a chance to review what I have written. Would that be okay to you?

5. You can stop this interview any time, without giving me any reason. And if you mention anything that you do not want me to publish, please let me know and I will accommodate your request. Would that be okay?

6. Do you have any further questions? Can we start the interview now?

*Like the interview information sheet and the written consent form, this oral consent script is also part of the ANU Human Ethics Research Protocols.
Appendix C. Written Consent Form*

“Environmental Governance for Ecological and Human Wellbeing”

I hereby understand about the objective, the contents of the research, and the consequences of my involvement. Therefore, I agree to be interviewed under the conditions set out earlier as included in the interview information page.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

*The written consent will be required where appropriate.
Appendix D. Guide Questions for the In-depth Interviews with Governing Actors*

(These include representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and other relevant national government agencies, assisting International and Local NGOs, Local Governments, Indigenous Peoples, other Community Organizations, as well as Business Groups involved in the management of the forest protected area. Responses are complemented with information obtained through relevant documents review and other sources)

Legitimacy

1.) What is your/your organization’s role in the management of the forest protected area?
2.) What do you think are the primary management objectives behind your initiatives in protecting the forests? Do you think these objectives are appropriate? Why or why not?
3.) What are the key strategies and processes employed?
4.) Do you accept and support them? How?
5.) What can you say about the outcomes of those strategies employed to manage the forest protected area? How do you perceive them?

Accountability

6.) Whom do you perceive as the key decision-makers on things that greatly affect how the forest protected area is managed? Do you think the roles among these key decision-makers are clear? Why do you say so?
7.) What can you say about the quality and timeliness of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that are used?
8.) Are there clarity and justifications of the bases behind key decisions?
9.) Do you feel that the main people holding responsibilities can be held responsible? Any form of sanctions employed?
10.) Would you know if there are auditing bodies that check performance targets and accomplishments?

Cost-Efficiency

11.) What have you observed as the usual management’s considerations when it comes to problem identification on key issues? Would you mind citing some examples?
12.) When it comes to key decision-making, what are the usual processes employed based on your experience? What can you say about the timespent before reaching decisions or collective actions? Are they just enough, or are they excessive? Why do you think so?
13.) What can you say about the bureaucracy involved in decision-making? Is it complex or is it simple? Please explain.
14.) What are your views on the financial and other costs involved in decision-making and other relevant processes?
15.) What can you say about the feasibility of the implementation of those key decisions earlier mentioned?

*There will be a Tagalog, as well as a Visayan translation and applied where appropriate. The researcher is fluent in both local languages. Responses from these questions are meant to complement the information that will be gathered from documents review. Some specifics of the questions (and the style of questioning) will be adjusted depending on the organizational affiliation and the particular role of the individual being interviewed.
Coordination

16.) As your office or organization performs its responsibilities, are there mechanisms and processes that are created and/or employed to effectively engage local communities, development practitioners, scientists, researchers, policy makers, scientists, researchers, or other relevant stakeholders? Do you think relevant (and often competing) views and values from various stakeholders are taken into account in decisions to address the forest management objectives? Would you mind elaborating on this?

17.) Have you observed if the key managing actors are focusing more on public good, rather than private? Why do you say so? Can you site some collective actions done for a collective good?

18.) What can you say about the alignment or consistency of the legal/policy framework for forest management, with other development strategies or policies? Do you think the protected area framework is compatible with relevant local, national, and international strategies, policies, and laws? Can you share any implications of this on the ground? What coordinative actions have been done in this regard if any?

Resilience

19.) Do you know of any severe ecological and social problems that impacted the involved protected area and its stakeholders? Please elaborate.

20.) What solutions were employed by the governance mechanism to address them? What can you say about their effects in terms of meeting its objectives for both forests and people? Would you mind explaining them?

Note: After the above 5 general sets of questions, the respondent will be asked if he/she thinks the management is indeed protecting the environment or if it is rather making the latter worse, and to elaborate her/his answer. He/she will also be asked to share her/his opinion on how things can be improved (in terms of the 5 criteria or beyond) for better performance.
Appendix E. Guide Questions for the In-depth Interviews
with Forest-Dependent Communities

(These include representatives of households, men and women, living in the forest or its
fringes, and relying on the forest resources for their livelihoods. Most of them are indigenous
peoples.)

1.) How long have you been in this village?

2.) What are your family’s means of livelihood?

3.) Are you able to plant trees in the area? What particular rights do you have with
regards to the land you are currently tilling if any? What are the common challenges
you encounter in your community?

4.) Are you aware of the forest protection program in your area? If yes, do you have an
involvement in some of the program’s activities? What are they? Does the
management proactively engage the communities? In what way? Are you involved in
some decision-making processes? Or are you aware if other local community
representatives are involved? How?

5.) What else can you say about this program?

6.) How does it affect your access and use rights to forests and forest products? Does it
affect your livelihoods and income?

7.) Do you feel that the management strategies protect the environment? Are things
getting better or worse, or what is your own assessment of it? Why do you say so?

8.) With the implementation of the program, what other changes (social-ecological-
economic) have you experienced or observed?

9.) What are your coping mechanisms and adaptation strategies in the face of external
forces and changes? (e.g. a farming conservation technology in response to the
impact of soil erosion; adoption of agroforestry system; or other climatic disaster
adaptation measures). Are these parts of your traditional knowledge or practice? If
not, who introduced this to you? What can you say about these initiatives?

10) Do you have any suggestion on how the forest in your area (under the conservation
mechanism) should be effectively managed?

Thank You!
Appendix F. Pictures 1-6: Northern Sierra Madre

1. Aerial view of the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park (also shown is a river system inside)

2. A meeting of the members of the NSMNP Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), 14/4/10

3. A check point at a logging hotspot, Abuan River, where illegally cut woods are transported out of the protected area by the river.

4. A site in Ilagan, Isabela’s capital city where the logs confiscated by the Provincial Task Force on Forest Protection are brought.


6. An Agta interview respondent in the coastal town of Palanan.

(Note: Except for picture #4 which was taken by an interviewee, all the photos were taken by the author during her field work in 2010)
Appendix G. Pictures 7-12: Kitanglad Case

7. Mossy forest at Mt. Dulang-Dulang, the highest peak of the Kitanglad mountain range

8. At Mt. Dulang-Dulang with a sign warning against trespassing in the ancestral territory

9. DENR & LGU personnel coordinating and consulting with community leaders

10. Community mapping carried out by indigenous peoples in support to the MKRNP

11. A vegetable grower in Lantapan, one of the municipalities in the Kitanglad area

12. Cabbage, among the commonly grown vegetables at the PA’s buffer zone

(Note: Pictures #9 & 10 were respectively obtained from the MKRNP’s office of the PASu, and from KIN- the main NGO assisting the indigenous peoples in the area; the rest were taken by the author during her field work in 2010)
Appendix H. Pictures 13-18: Kanlaon Case

13. A view of the Mt. Kanlaon summit

14. A tenant farmer working in a sugar cane hacienda near the Kanlaon protected area in Negros

15. MKNP banner at the office of the Protected Area Superintendent (DENR-PASu)

16. Part of EDC’s geothermal development operations within the protected area’s buffer zone

17. A meeting among forest volunteers, members of the Kanlaon Green Brigade (KGB), La Castellana, 24/6/10

18. One of the interviews conducted by the researcher (with a development worker of MUAD in the protected area)

(Note: Except for pictures #16 & 18 which were obtained from the MKNP’s office of the PASu, and from an NGO worker respectively, photos were taken by the author during her field work, 2010)