



International Conference on Natural Assets

8-11 January, 2003
Tagaytay City, The Philippines

Political Economy Research Institute and
Centre for Science and the Environment

AGENDA

OVERVIEW: The three-and-a-half days of the Conference are structured as follows:

- *Day One (Wednesday): Discussions of background papers prepared for the conference. The day's aim is to build a coherent vision of the role of natural assets in poverty reduction and environmental protection.*
- *Day Two (Thursday): Field visits to rural or urban sites where communities are engaged in natural-asset building initiatives. We will examine practical efforts to combine poverty reduction and environmental goals. The field trips will also provide time for informal conversations among conference participants.*
- *Day Three (Friday): Discussions of the experiences of practitioners engaged in on-the-ground efforts to build natural assets in the hands of low-income people. The day's aim is to explore the opportunities and challenges of putting natural-asset building strategies into practice.*
- *Day Four (Saturday morning): Next steps: how to develop further the natural asset-building framework; how to make it useful to practitioners; ideas for future activities that would advance the goals of building natural assets. In the afternoon, participants are invited to participate in discussions of whether (and if so, how) to organize regional workshops or conferences on natural assets.*

Tuesday, 7 January 2003

5:00 pm - 6:00	Introductions
6:00-7:00	Reception
7:00-	Dinner

Wednesday, 8 January

- 8:00 am - 8:30** **Welcoming remarks**
 – Sunita Narain (*Centre for Science and the Environment*)
 – Eugene Gonzales (*former Executive Director, Foundation for a Sustainable Society*)
 – James Boyce (*Political Economy Research Institute*)
- 8:30 - 8:45** **Preview of the coming days**
 – James Boyce (*Political Economy Research Institute*)
- 8:45 – 9:15** **Asset Building to Fight Poverty and Injustice**
 – Michael Conroy (*Ford Foundation*)
- 9:15-9:45** **From Natural Resources to Natural Assets**
 – James Boyce (*Political Economy Research Institute*)
- 9:45-10:00** **Coffee break**
- 10:00-11:30** **Panel Discussions of Papers: Session I**

Three panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL I-A: THE STRUGGLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Low-income and minority communities often bear disproportionate burdens from pollution and environmental degradation. In organizing to redress these environmental injustices, communities assert the rights to clean air and clean water. In so doing, they appropriate ‘environmental sinks’ that were previously treated as open-access resources, transforming them into natural assets under democratic control.

- Papers: ‘Environmental Justice: Reflections from the United States’
 – Manuel Pastor (*University of California, Santa Cruz*)
- ‘International Environmental Justice: Building the Natural Assets
 of the World’s Poor’
 – Krista Harper (*Smith College*)
 – Ravi Rajan (*University of California, Santa Cruz*)

PANEL I-B: MARINE RESOURCES AS NATURAL ASSETS

The living resources of the oceans and coastal seas are often treated as open-access resources: in principle available to all, but in practice increasingly claimed by wealthy and powerful interests to the detriment of low-income fisherfolk. Efforts to re-establish common property rights and invest in marine ecosystems can simultaneously advance the goals of poverty reduction and environmental protection.

- Papers: ‘The Blessing of the Commons: Small-Scale Fisheries, Community Property Rights, and Coastal Natural Assets’
 – John Kurien (Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum)
- ‘Greening the Blue Revolution: A Natural Assets Perspective’
 – Susan Stonich (University of California, Santa Barbara)

PANEL I-C: FORESTS AS NATURAL ASSETS

Across the world, forest-dependent communities often count among the poorest of the poor. Increasingly, both their livelihoods – and the forests themselves – are threatened by powerful newcomers: logging firms, cattle ranchers, and other outside interests. Efforts to defend the forests and to defend the livelihoods of the poor can go hand-in-hand.

- Papers: ‘Natural Assets and Participatory Forest Management in West Africa’
 – Kojo Amanor (University of Ghana)
- ‘Building Forest Assets: Lessons from Indonesia’
 – Dani Munggoro (LATIN, Jakarta)

11:30 -12:30 Plenary: Rapporteurs’ Reports from Panel Session I

12:30 pm -2:00 Lunch

2:00-3:15 Panel Discussions of Papers: Session II

Again three panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL II-A: GLOBAL WARMING AND GREENHOUSE JUSTICE

International climate change presents unique challenges and opportunities for natural asset-building. The carbon-absorption capacity of the atmosphere is a global open-access resource. Current international negotiations that aim to combat global warming confront difficult questions of how to allocate carbon

emission rights among and within countries. How these are resolved will have profound implications for poverty and equity as well as for the environment.

- Papers: ‘Equitable Carbon Revenue Distribution under an International Emissions Trading Regime’
 – Dan Kammen and Nate Hultman (University of California, Berkeley)
- ‘Justice in the Global Greenhouse’
 – Sunita Narain (Centre for Science and the Environment)

PANEL II-B: WILDLIFE AS NATURAL ASSETS

Access to wildlife is governed in diverse regimes, ranging from state and private ownership to common property and open access. In principle, recent efforts to promote community-based natural resource management have aimed to reconcile goals of environmental protection and poverty reduction. In practice, however, their record has been mixed, offering important lessons for natural asset-building strategies.

- Papers: ‘Devolving Wildlife Management: Experiences in Southern Africa’
 – James Murombedzi (Ford Foundation, Johannesburg)
- ‘Ecological Restoration of Inland Fisheries: Building Natural Assets in Rural Bangladesh’
 – Stephen Minkin and Mokhlesur Rahman (Center for Natural Resources Studies, Bangladesh)

PANEL II-C: MINERAL RESOURCES AS NATURAL ASSETS

‘Sustainable development’ may seem to be an oxymoron when applied to non-renewable resources such as minerals and oil. The environmental and social impacts of mining operations are often devastating for nearby communities. Struggles to defend and expand the rights of these communities – including the right to a clean environment, the right to share in the benefits from mining activities, and the right to say ‘No’ – can be seen as efforts to build natural assets.

- Papers: ‘Mining and Communities: Poverty Amidst Wealth’
 – Karyn Keenan (CooperAccion, Peru)
 – Jose de Echave (CooperAccion, Peru)
 – Ken Traynor (Canadian Environmental Law Association)
- ‘Assets of Nature in Russia: Lessons Learned from the Decade of Societal Transformation’
 – Elena Nikitina and Vladimir Kotov (Institute of World Economy)

and International Relations, Moscow)

3:15-3:30 **Coffee break**

3:30-4:45 **Panel Discussions of Papers: Session III**

Again three panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL III-A: GREENING MARKETS

To what extent can ‘green markets’ assist natural asset-building strategies? In international trade, advocacy-led certification movements such as the Forestry Stewardship Council have achieved some success both in securing price premia to reward sustainable environmental practices and in raising public awareness of production processes. At the same time, in many countries the market for recycled materials has grown rapidly. The extent to which these market developments can be harnessed to benefit low-income communities and individuals has emerged as a key issue.

Papers: ‘Wastes as Assets: Limits and Potentials’
 – *Eugene Gonzales (independent consultant and former Executive Director of the Foundation for a Sustainable Society)*

 ‘Using Certification Systems as Tools for Natural Asset Building: Worldwide Potential, Experiences to Date, and Challenges’
 – *Michael Conroy (Ford Foundation, New York)*

PANEL III-B: LAND REFORM AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

In agricultural societies, land reform can build natural assets in the hands of low-income individuals and communities via redistribution. At the same time, there is scope for building natural assets in rural areas via ‘internalization’ strategies that reward landowners for producing environmental services such as watershed regulation and biodiversity conservation. The promise offered by these routes to building natural assets is matched by the challenges they face.

Papers: ‘Extractive Reserves: Building Natural Assets in Amazonia’
 – *Anthony Hall (London School of Economics)*

 ‘Payments for Environmental Services: Experiences from Latin America’
 – *Herman Rosa (PRISMA, San Salvador)*

PANEL III-C: BUILDING NATURAL ASSETS THROUGH ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

‘Ecological restoration’ – investments in natural capital that repair past environmental degradation and rebuild damaged ecosystems – can yield major livelihood improvements for low-income communities. Such activities demonstrate that human impacts on the environment can be positive as well as negative. But communities often need support in order to undertake ecological restoration successfully.

Papers: ‘Natural Resource Management and Poverty Alleviation in Mountain Areas: Approaches and Efforts’
– N.S. Jodha (*International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Kathmandu*)

‘Harvesting the Rain: Redressing Ecological Poverty through Participatory Democracy’
– Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain (*Centre for Science and the Environment*)

4:45-5:45 Plenary: Rapporteurs’ Reports from Panel Sessions II and III

5:45-7:00 Poster Session and Reception

7:00- Dinner

Thursday, 9 January

Field trips: Participants will join either Group A or Group B.

GROUP A: RURAL FIELD TRIP.

Group A will visit two rural sites in the province of Batangas.

The first site is the town of Calatagan, where we will meet with SAMMACA (Samahan ng Maliit na Mangingisda sa Calatagan, or the Association of Small Fisherfolk of Calatagan), a federation of ten fisherfolk organizations with a total of more than 700 members. When pronounced as “sama ka”, the federation’s name translates as “join us.” Since 1998, the federation has chaired the town’s FARMC (Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council), a body mandated by the Philippine Fisheries Code to recommend local ordinances and policies to the municipality’s legislative body. SAMMACA’s members are deputized by the local government to apprehend users of illegal fishing methods such as fine mesh nets, cyanide, and blast fishing – an example of natural asset-building via the *appropriation* of open-access resources. They are also engaged in

mangrove reforestation projects – an example of natural asset-building via the *investment* in ecological restoration.

The second site is a barangay (village) in the town of Balayan, where we will meet with the Gimalas Multi-Purpose Cooperative (GMPC), a member organization of the NAGKASAMA federation of farmers' cooperatives. More than 300 farmer-families reside in the village, 62 of whom are members of the GMPC. The GMPC farmers cultivate approximately 100 hectares of land, about 80% of which is planted to sugar cane. Most farmers are tenants who get 75% of the income from the harvest and pay 25% to the landlord, but more than 20 of the farmers have gained title to the land they till through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law passed in the late 1980s – an example of natural asset-building via *redistribution*. Recently, some land-reform beneficiaries have been enticed to sell their land back to the landlord, who plans to convert the farmlands to more lucrative residential and commercial uses. This threatens to undo the small but hard-earned gains in agrarian reform.

GROUP B: URBAN FIELD TRIP.

Group B will visit an urban site in metropolitan Manila, where we will meet with the Payatas Scavengers Association, Inc. (PSAI). Payatas is the country's largest open dumpsite, occupying 20 hectares in Quezon City and receiving around 1,200 tons of trash per day.

Around 6,000 waste-pickers comb through this mountain of garbage. On July 10, 2000, more than 200 of them lost their lives when a huge portion of the mountain collapsed after strong rains. After this tragedy, the government closed the site. However, upon the request of the waste-pickers themselves, the dump was reopened after a few months.

PSAI is one of seven scavenger associations authorized by the Quezon City government to pick from newly delivered garbage. It was organized by the Vincentian Missionaries in the early 1990s. Whereas the other associations are dominated by a "junkshop cartel" that tries to minimize the buying price of scavenged items for recycling, PSAI prides itself in being the only association that is controlled by the scavenger-members themselves. PSAI implements savings, housing, credit, health, and literacy projects to support the scavengers and their families.

By recycling materials, the members of PSAI and the other scavengers at Payatas perform a valuable environmental service. In effect, they convert wastes into assets, thereby conserving raw materials and landfill space. Efforts to reward the scavengers for this environmental service – an example of natural asset-building via *internalization* – can improve the livelihoods of some of the city's poorest people.

Friday, 10 January**8:00 am -8:30****Announcements and Preview****8:30-9:00**

The New Environmental Activists: Report on the Conference held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, March 2002
 – Manuel Pastor (University of California-Santa Cruz)

9:00-10:00**Natural Asset-Building in Practice: Session I**

Two panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL I-A: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- *Ferenc Poos (Autonomia Foundation, Budapest)*
- *Carlos Porras (Communities for a Better Environment, Los Angeles)*

PANEL I-B: MARINE FISHERIES

- *Pisit Charmsnoh (Yadfon Association, Thailand)*
- *Chandrika Sharma (International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, Chennai)*

10:00-10:15**Coffee break****10:15-11:15****Natural Asset-Building in Practice: Session II**

Two panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL II-A: NATURAL ASSETS IN THE SKY: GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

- *Paul Baer (Eco-Equity, Berkeley)*
- *Sunita Narain (Centre for Science and the Environment, New Delhi)*

PANEL II-B: BUILDING NATURAL ASSETS: AFRICAN EXPERIENCES

- *Nomveuselelo (Mvusy) Songelwa (The Rural Action Committee, South Africa)*

11:15-12:15

Natural Asset-Building in Practice: Session III

Two panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL III-A: RURAL NATURAL ASSETS: EXPERIENCES IN THE PHILIPPINES

- *Oscar Castillo (Center for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development)*
- *Ruperto Aleroza (SAMMACA, Batangas)*

PANEL III-B: COMMUNITY-BASED FORESTRY

- *Budhita Kismadi (LATIN - The Indonesian Tropical Institute)*
- *Mubariq Ahmad (World Wide Fund for Nature, Jakarta)*

12:15 pm -2:00

Lunch

2:00-3:00

Natural Asset-Building in Practice: Session IV

Two panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL IV-A: NATURAL ASSETS AND SMALL FARMERS

- *Ran Singh Parmar (Ekta Parishad, Madhya Pradesh, India)*
- *Fatima Jibrell (Horn of Africa Relief and Development Organization, Nairobi)*

PANEL IV-B: MONITORING CORPORATE BEHAVIOR

- *Isabel de la Torre (Industrial Shrimp Action Network)*
- *Maria Elena Martinez (CorpWatch, San Francisco)*

3:00-4:00**Natural Asset-Building in Practice: Session V**

Two panels will meet concurrently:

PANEL V-A: BUILDING NATURAL ASSETS: EXPERIENCES IN
YUNNAN, CHINA

- *Xu Jianchu (Center for Biodiversity and Indigenous Knowledge)*
- *Zhao Yaqiao (Center for Community Development Studies)*

PANEL V-B: TAPPING ECO-MARKETS

- *Josefina Aranda (CEPCO, Oaxaca)*
- *Tasso Resende de Azevedo (IMAFLOA, Brazil)*

4:00-4:15**Coffee break****4:15-5:30****Plenary Session: Taking Stock**

Discussion of the challenges of natural asset-building in practice, drawing lessons from the experiences shared by practitioners in today's breakout sessions.

7:00-**Dinner****Saturday, 11 January****8:30 am -1:00****Discussion of Next Steps****1:00 pm****Formal adjournment**