Objectives of the Workshop

Steve Harrison and John Herbohn

This paper sets out the objectives, scope and planning activities for the end-of-project workshop for ACIAR Project ASEM/2000/088 – Redevelopment of a Timber Industry following Extensive Land Clearing (otherwise known as the Smallholder Forestry Project). The Smallholder Forestry Project terminated at the end of 2003, and the workshop was one of the activities of a 12-months bridging period while a new project was developed. In this context, it was focal to the finalisation of research, documentation, reflection on findings and review of performance, and planning for further research.

SPECIFIC WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

It is a standard practice for many agencies, including the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), to hold end-of-project (EOP) workshops, particularly for projects which are regarded as successful. In a broad sense, the objective of such a workshop is to present results of the research undertaken in the ACIAR Smallholder Forestry Project, as a ‘show and tell’ occasion. However, there are in fact a number of reasons why holding an end-of-project workshop is desirable:

Technology transfer. Perhaps the most important reason for holding an EOP workshop is as a vehicle to disseminate more broadly the findings of the research activities. There is no point in carrying out research, no matter how technically excellent, unless the results of the research are made available to the potential adoptors. In the case of the Smallholder Forestry Project, the objective is particularly to acquaint researchers and agency officers (especially DENR officers, representatives of other government agencies, and smallholder representatives in Leyte) of project findings.

Providing an impetus to finalising research and writing up findings. It is often a failing of major research projects that the findings are not well documented. Holding an end-of-project workshop imposes some discipline on the project participants, in terms of writing up their research activities, in a form which can be communicated to a wider audience.

Reflection and review. An EOP workshop provides an opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved, and to draw together the various threads of information, and highlight and where the major successes are, and where gaps in knowledge remain. The achievements of the project team, in terms of both additional outputs and shortfalls of the research program relative to the initial plans and stated objectives were also highlighted.

Providing a non-perishable and widely available documentation of research activities, experiences and findings, accessible to a wide audience. The usual output from an EOP workshop is a set of proceedings or monograph containing copies of the various presentations. This provides a readily accessible set of papers on the research, as a permanent record, available to a wide audience, including administrators and future researchers. Without this activity, even though in-house papers may be prepared, they can be difficult or impossible for researchers involved in similar topics to access, hence the knowledge is lost, or the research repeated leading to inefficient use of scarce research funds. The workshop papers may also become drafts for journal articles. Going on to the stage of journal publication provides a further peer review and critical validation of the research and findings.
Demonstration that public funds have been used appropriately. As an exercise in accountability, an EOP workshop demonstrates that the funding by governments has been well spent, and new knowledge has been generated and new techniques developed.

Provide a basis for planning further research activities. By taking stock of where research has progressed to, and what are the limitations of the research and gaps in information, and EOP workshop can be a valuable precursor to planning new project work. This is the case for the Smallholder Forestry Project, where a proposal for a follow-on project is being developed and refined. The EOP workshop also provides an opportunity to acquaint potential new project members with the forestry scene in Leyte, and to introduce Leyte researchers to them.

To some extent, the workshop is an exercise in showcasing research activities and findings, rather than in and not of ‘workshopping’ or holding group discussions on research. This orientation, and the large number of presentations which are being made, means that tight timelines have to be followed. An intensive series of presentations is made, the downside of which is that the time available for group discussion is limited.

PLANNING OF THE WORKSHOP PROGRAM AND TARGETING OF PRESENTERS AND PARTICIPANTS

While the Smallholder Forestry Project was one of a group of projects which were initiated as a result of a ‘special call’ by ACIAR for research in Indonesia and The Philippines, and did not have a final workshop built into the project plan and budget, it was always an intention of the project coordinators to hold a workshop to showcase their research findings. Further, it was anticipated that if the research activities proved to be productive, ACIAR would provide financial support for such a workshop, and this turned out to be the case.

Considerable time and effort was expended in deciding on the workshop program, including inviting (or coercing) project members to provide reports of their research activities and findings.

Workshop participants were sought, not only from project researchers, but from other Leyte State University (LSU) staff as well as government agencies (particularly the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and local government units), from the timber industry, and from Community Based Forest Management groups.

SCOPE OF THE WORKSHOP

The end-of-project workshop was designed to present reports on all the research activities under the various project objectives. The Forestry Project had six objectives, as listed in Table 1. The Australian component of the research (under Objective 6) was not covered in the workshop. The capacity building objective did not lend itself to specific project presentations. However, capacity building at LSU was reflected in the high standard of the papers presented by Philippine researchers, and in publications prior to the workshop, including the training manual and two special issues of *Annals of Tropical Research* in which local researchers contributed papers, and in the Training Manual on *Socio-economic Research Methods in Forestry* (Harrison et al. 2002), which contained papers from a training workshop at Leyte State University at the commencement of the project.
Table 1. Objectives of the Smallholder Forestry Project

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<td>1.</td>
<td>To identify and investigate the important social factors influencing participation in small-scale forestry by investigating landholder and community attitudes to small scale forestry.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>To identify and investigate the key economic factors affecting the uptake of small-scale forestry.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>To determine the support and facilitation measures needed to overcome impediments and promote small scale forestry in Leyte Province.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>To enhance the capacity of local researchers to examine socio-economic aspects of small-scale forestry and policy development to support increased plantings.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>To develop a structured methodology for examining the requirements for, and promotion of, more rapid adoption of small-scale forestry, which can be applied to other regions in the Philippines.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>To examine the potential for re-establishment of a rainforest cabinet timber industry on the Atherton Tablelands of north Queensland (drawing on research on this topic already undertaken in the Rainforest CRC).</td>
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Some scene-setting presentations were invited by university and DENR officers outside the project team. Also, potential members of the proposed follow-on project (now in progress as ACIAR Project ASEM/2002/052 – Improving financial returns to smallholder tree farmers in the Philippines) also attended the workshop, and some papers have been included which relate to planned research in this new project.

The workshop was divided into four major themes: Social issues in Leyte Smallholder forestry; Economic and markets issues; Technical studies (nursery practices, field trials, GPS and forest cover techniques); and Institutional and policy issues in Leyte forestry.

A major activity in the project was the survey of four Leyte communities, which provided information in relation to several of the project objectives, and findings from this activity formed the basis for a number of the presentations.

A meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was held as part of the end-of-project workshop, in part to seek input into the design of a follow-up research project, though not to provide material for these proceedings.

**PUBLICATION PLANS**

A major objective of the workshop was to produce this set of proceedings. However, it was also the intention to publish selected papers in international journals. Some of the papers contained in this volume have already been published, and prior publication is reported where this is the case. The delay in producing these proceedings of about one year is due to the need for review and revision of the papers presented at the workshop.

**CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

An end-of-project workshop is a major event for any team research activity, to bring the results together and allow reflection on what has been found in the research. Holding an end-of-project workshop provides a stimulus for results to be written up and hence made more widely available. It is also an exercise in accountability, to demonstrate to a wide audience (at the workshop, and as recipients of the proceedings) that the research funds have been well used. We hope that these proceedings will prove interesting and informative to readers.
REFERENCES