

Position Paper for Presentation to House Committees on Natural Resources, Agrarian Reform and Housing and Urban Development Resources on June 1, 2005

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The Upland development Programme in Southern Mindanao (UDP)

The upland situation of forestlands in the Country

Forestlands are non-Alienable and Disposable (A&D) Lands, which are supposed to be covered by primary or secondary forests. As of 2003 the status of land classification by the 'Forest Management Bureau shows that the total land area of the Philippines is 30 million has. A&D classified lands comprise of 14,145,078, unclassified lands of 1,089,118 has and 14,765,804 has is classified as forestlands¹. From these forestland area 3,272,912 has is established for residential area, so called timberland comprises of 10,227,847 has, National parks et al 893,221 and others 371,824 has².

While in 1900 around 70% of the Philippines or more than 20 million has were under forest cover, thereafter and particularly since 1950 forestlands have changed enormously. In 2003 forestlands lands comprised of about 50% of the country's total land area or about 15.9 million including unclassified forestlands, out of which only 4 million has of residual and an estimated 1 million ha of old-growth forest remained, mostly in protected areas, reserves, concession areas and cancelled, suspended/expired concession areas³. This change in the forest landscape of the Philippines is visualised in the table on the next page.

The table shows the horrendous attack on the Philippines forest over recent decades. Particularly in the period 1970s and 80s when more than 10 million has were cut down. Meaning about 80% of the remaining forest was decimated in a few years only.

Less than 60 years ago, it is estimated that the population in these forestlands was not more than 3 million or 10% of the, that time, population in the Philippines of 30 million. Indigenous peoples occupied the forestlands being their ancestral domains, and sustained themselves from consuming and selling forest products and shifting agriculture. Latest population figures estimate that 30 million people out of 85 million or 35% now inhabit forestlands⁴ and these 35% are mainly supporting themselves by small-scale, often subsistence farming. As mentioned above, in 2003 the size of public forest 'timberlands' was estimated at around 10 million has, with 4 million ha of residual and an estimated 1 million ha of old-growth forest⁵. Perhaps it is safe to say that by now in 2005, most probably all timberlands accept say 1,5 million has covering protected areas etc. are somehow occupied and farmed or exploited otherwise. This would imply that today about 8.5 million has are farmed.

¹ <http://forestry.dent.gov.ph/stat2003htm>

² Mindanao total land area: 10,199,886 area, A&D lands: 4,131,306; forestlands 6,068,580 has.

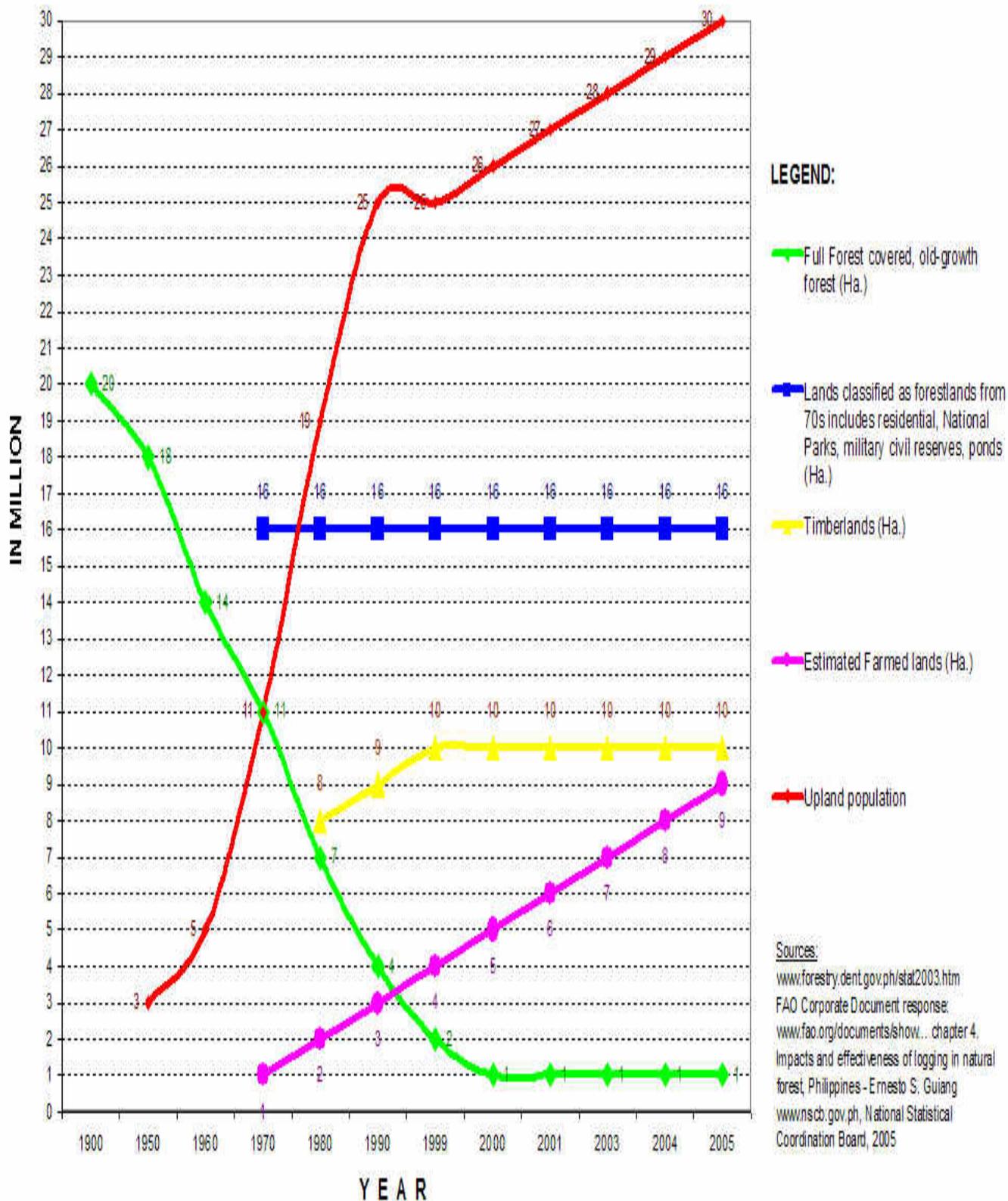
³ www.nscb.gov.ph, National Statistical Coordination Board, 2005

FAO Corporate Document response: <http://www.fao.org/documents/show.....chapter 4. Impacts and effectiveness of logging in natural forest Philippines – Ernesto S. Guiang>

⁴ Extrapolation from the figures in the FAO publication chapter 4. Impacts and effectiveness of logging in natural forest: Philippines – Ernesto S. Guiang

⁵ <http://forestry.dent.gov.ph/stat2003htm>

LAND USE AND POPULATION IN FOREST LAND



The figures above show the shocking encroachment by farmers into forestlands of the last 5-6 decades. There are several causes that could have forced people to occupy accessible forest areas and start farming there such as over-population and poverty problems in the lowlands and the taking over by large agri-business concerns of vast tracks of gently sloping lowland plantations, forcing many poor communities with no other option than to expand cultivation on ever steeper and higher up slopes. In this regard one should also mention that the concessionaire loggers, which cleared most of the forestlands, very well facilitated this migration while the occupying farmers effectively finished off the clearing job to serve their needs.

Those migrant-farmers are mostly unaware, unprepared and often not interested in sustainable agriculture. Identified reasons are among others the 'illegal' and hence insecure occupation of the land and the application of lowland farm technologies, the only ones they know. This type of farming paved the way for massive erosion and irreversible destruction of the forests with its vicious affects on the low lands, as is well documented by now. Based on research in Mindanao uplands, it is estimated that annually 3-10 cm of the soil, depending on the steepness of the slope that is farmed, is lost due to bad farming practices. This boils down to 360-1400 tons/ha of soil loss per year. Expanded countrywide and based on a conservative figure of say 50% of the 8.5 million has is farmed unsustainably and prone to erosion, then this would imply that the Philippines is washing away between 1.5 billion to 5 billions of tons of topsoil a year.

The prospect of alternative employment elsewhere resulting in a decreased number of households that make a living through farming in forestlands doesn't look very bright also for the coming decade. The relatively high birth rates in the country as well as the nearly total absence of a consistent, stringent effort to promote sustainable resource utilisation and protection in forestlands is also not very encouraging momentarily.

The effects of deforestation and subsequent soil erosion will no doubt reduce water supply for drinking as well as for power generation and irrigation which will affect the lowlands and cities. A continuous massive destruction and loss of life due to landslides, is predictable. From an economic point of view, the foregoing of the enormous potential for income generation from possible fruit orchards and forest trees in the potential productive 'forestlands' is a major loss to the country. Furthermore the past massive logging followed by the present unsustainable agriculture practices has resulted in extreme "poverty" in terms of biodiversity in 'forestlands'⁶. Not to speak about the suffering of the lowland dwellers, farmers and fishermen, who are equally affected by the damage of increased flooding and siltation.

In conclusion one may say that nowadays the Philippine upland resource base is seriously threatened and the possible near future effects are highly troublesome and should worry every Filipino. It seems also safe to say that the main cause is unsustainable farming practices inside the forestlands. Indirectly a similar threat hovers over the lowlands, which are affected by what's going on in forestlands. It seems that creative if not revolutionary solutions need to be sought to save the country from serious near future trouble and a new paradigm might be needed to address the concerns effectively. Any policy, action, support programme to stop the on-going destruction in forestlands should hence be focused on changing the upland farm practices for the better.

⁶ See Haribon Foundation, Power Point Presentation " The Scary Story", 2001

What has been done, what can be done more

The Philippine Government has noticed of course the deterioration in recent years of forestlands. In addition to mere project type interventions like the UDP, the most important action perhaps the government has undertaken to address these concerns has been the introduction of the CBFMA model, where upland communities are encouraged to sustainably use their upland resource base in the area delineated for them. Lately also the IPRA law was adopted and subsequently the NCIP was established to give justice to the Indigenous Peoples (IPs) by providing them with titles such as CADTs and CALTs in their ancestral domain areas, which in turn would create better conditions for sustainable forest land use and protection.

This has however not prevented at all the further encroachment into forestlands outside these delineated areas awarded to People's Organisations (POs) and IPs, as can be observed by every interested and able body visiting the forestlands in the country. Besides the sustainable use and protection of the lands that have these instruments and titles is not at all guaranteed due to the absence of effective extension services in respect of EAC, orientation, training and coaching of the certificate holders⁷. The poor enforcement of the numerous laws (see table below) has also contributed to the continuous and perhaps increasing destruction of forestlands. The conclusion one has to draw is that actually the implementation of these policies has failed to generate the desired restoration and protection of the upland resource base. For key policies see table on page 6.

There are various well-tested technologies available that have the potential and can be instrumental in helping farmers to shift from unsustainable to sustainable farming practices. In a nutshell these technologies suggest farmers to:

- grow short-term cash crops like corn to protect their land against erosion. The type of protection measure depends on the location in the landscape, steepness of slope, soil depth and type, elevation etc.
- switch from crops like corn to agro-forestry as fast as possible

Although there are localised success stories, in general the adoption rate by upland farmers of these technologies is poor to very poor, countrywide. Research and trials point out that there are some key conditions that have to be in place to make upland farmers shift from unsustainable to sustainable agricultural practices.

First there is the issue of uncontrolled upland landuse in forest (public) land. Most upland barangays do not have an agreed landuse plan, fully internalised by all stakeholders, which guides the barangay population on what areas are suitable to be allocated for agricultural lands, what areas should stay as 'real forest' or be reforested and protected and what areas are for settlements and other purposes. Without such an agreed and adopted plan, properly backed up by legislation to facilitate its implementation, practice shows that it is very hard to prevent further encroachment into forestlands.

The second fundamental condition is that farmers need to increase productivity on existing farmed lands, often just for the sake of staying alive or, in the case of more entrepreneurial ones, to increase their incomes by marketing access produce and thereby reducing the need to expand their land acreage. Productivity increase can be stimulated substantially by ensuring good access to markets and services.

⁷ See "study on implications of UDP support to facilitate security & control by upland farmers", Patrick Dugan, Jocelyn Cabo, Ismael Estaban, 2002

In respect of formulating a barangay landuse plan in a highly participatory manner, a plan which includes detailed maps and data bases, with clearly delineated areas for agriculture, protected forest etc., experience shows that this should be done within the context of a barangay development plan. Furthermore a trained MLGU team needs to coach the upland barangay LGUs and their communities to come up with such plans. Experience also shows that an effective way to build the necessary LGU and community capacities in respect of landuse based barangay development planning, DILG/HLURB accredited CSOs, well versed with participatory landuse planning/barangay development planning processes, should be tapped.

If upland farmers productivity is to be increased, it is crucial that farmers have access to effective extension services in areas of soil and water conservation and improved crop production. Assistance with some minor inputs supply from their LGUs and other stakeholders, like tree seedlings and quality seeds for example, is also a necessary condition for success.

Regarding protection of the remaining forest pockets and/or reforesting 'forestlands' agreed upon in the barangay landuse plan, the tested and most appropriate way to do that is through implementing the activities under a co-management arrangement between the upland community or its organisation, the barangay LGU, the municipal LGU and the DENR/CENRO whereby the community will be mandated by the authorities to protect, reforest the agreed area. Extensive EAC support to the community as well as LGUs, preferably by a suitable and reliable environmental CSO/NGO has proven to be most effective in forest protection and reforestation.

Regarding access to markets and services, there is an urgent and constant need to keep important upland barangay roads well maintained and hence passable at relative low cost. The best option is for the barangay LGU to establish permanent, well-trained maintenance crews on these important roads and provide the crews with proper tools to do the work. It is also recommended that the BLGU contracts the work out to a barangay community organisation, to increase responsibility and awareness among the barangay population in respect of the need to keep their roads in a good condition as well as to create employment and to keep scarce financial resources within the local economy.

Key forestry policies of the Philippines⁸

Policy instrument	Form and year of issuance	Major focus and mandate
Revised Forestry Code	Presidential Decree No. 705 of 1975	Creation of the Bureau of Forest Development (BFD) with line authority. Mandates the adoption of multiple use, land classification and delineation of forestlands, key conservation and reforestation strategies, census and initial recognition of forest occupants.
The 1987 Philippine Constitution	1987 Constitution	Adoption of the Regalian Doctrine; the State may undertake on the development and utilization of natural resources or enter into co-production, joint venture, or production agreements.
Executive Order No. 192 on the Reorganization of the Environment and Natural Resources	Executive Order with legislative and executive powers issued in 1987	Downgraded the BFD from line into a staff bureau; DENR was mandated to conserve, manage, develop, properly use, license and regulate the use of natural resources.
Local Government Code	Republic Act No. 7160 of 1991	Partially devolved some functions of the DENR to the LGUs.
The Law on National Integrated Protected Area Systems	Republic Act No. 7586 issued in 1992	Allocation of forestlands and forest resources to protected area systems for biodiversity purposes, preservation of habitats, watershed protection, and maintenance of ecological balance.
The Law on Forest Charges on Timber and Other Forest Products	Republic Act No. 7161 issued in 1991	Mandated the Government to increase forest charges for timber and non-timber forest products up to 25 percent and 10 percent of FOB prices, respectively.
Executive Order No. 263 on Community-based Forest Management Strategy	Executive Order of 1995 with no legislative power	Mandated the DENR to adopt CBFM as the strategy for sustainable forestry and social justice.
Indigenous People's Rights Act	Republic Act No. 8371 in 1997	Mandated the Government through the newly created National Commission on Indigenous Peoples to recognize, protect and promote the rights of indigenous people.

⁸ FAO Corporate Document response: <http://www.fao.org/documents/show.....chapter 4. Impacts and effectiveness of logging in natural forest Philippines – Ernesto S. Guiang>

Explanatory Note

Policy implications/recommendations:

For Provincial, Municipal and Barangay LGUs and upland communities

- P/MLGUs should support BLGUs and the upland communities with the formulation of a barangay landuse plan within the context of a Barangay Development Plan (BDP), which is prepared in a participatory manner and properly backed up by legislative action. In such a case the chances that the plan is adopted and successfully implemented are maximised. All development interventions should then follow the landuse plan
- All MLGUs with upland areas should fill up the MENRO post. The MENRO must be well trained in coaching and advising the barangay LGU and communities, migrants as well as Indigenous Peoples, regarding the application of appropriate soil and water conservation measures, forest protection and the like. Together with other law enforcers, he/she will also be equipped and mandated to enforce the implementation of the agreed barangay landuse plan as mentioned. Furthermore, were CBFMAs, CADTs and CALTs haven been awarded, he/she will be the chief Advisor to the POs and IPs in respect of ensuring sustainable environmental utilisation and protection of the areas concerned
- All MLGUs must put in place and fund an effective agricultural extension system for agriculture in forestlands under the supervision of the Municipal Agricultural Office (MAO), which is backed up by appropriate legislative action. The extension system would consist of:
 - a. A barangay based Agricultural Technician (AT) who is well trained and familiar with sustainable agricultural practices on sloping lands and an ‘expert’ in facilitation and communication skills, and who provides his/her services on a full time basis to the farmers making a living in sloping forest lands in the concerned barangay
 - b. A barangay extension worker volunteer (BEW) who is well trained and familiar with sustainable sloping agricultural practices and an ‘expert’ in facilitation and communication skills, to complement the work of the AT in providing the required services by the farmers making a living in sloping forest lands in the concerned barangay. The BEW should be appointed by the BLGU and confirmed by the MLGU, which provide him/her with some incentives
 - c. A group of farmer trainers, at least one from each sitio in the barangay with sloping forestlands, who are familiar with and have applied appropriate Soil and Water Conservation Measures (SWCMs) on their own farms and have acquired the skills and knowledge on growing the relevant and suitable crops in their respective sitios
 - d. A farmer based learning site in each barangay that demonstrates the technologies and can accommodate hands-on training to upland farmers in the barangay
- The P/MLGU should ensure that appropriate engineering services are made available to the BLGUs and community contractors in respect of maintenance of the relevant barangay access roads as referred to above.

National Agencies

- The NEDA/HLURB to monitor through its RPEMS the LGUs' adopted resource base policies for protection or utilisation of forestlands and ensure enforcement
- The NEDA/HLURB to train, build capacity and accredit at least one CSO per province that can take care of training the municipality teams that will facilitate the barangay landuse/BDP process, assist with adoption of the plans by all stakeholders and facilitate that sufficient budget is allocated by the various councils to ensure smooth implementation
- The DENR/DLR should devolve all its present functions in respect of protection measures in non-NIPAS forestlands, reserves et al, including the awarding of tenurial instruments, to the M/BLGUs, who from then onwards will be the only responsible legal parties for ensuring the sustainable use and protection of forestlands following the policy recommendations made above
- The relevant sections of the DENR/DLR will be transformed into a capacity building institution that will service the M/BLGUs and their upland community/community organisation (primarily to install a local environment code) and on how-to's in respect of implementation of the said code
- The DA should formulate and implement an upland agricultural policy that will support/facilitate LGU efforts towards sustainable agricultural development in those upland areas that have been reserved for agriculture in the adopted barangay landuse plans
- Based on DAs upland policy, it will instruct its ATIs and RFUs with its supporting bureaus to strengthen the LGU extension mechanism outlined above, through fulfilling the research needs of upland BLGUs and its farmers and through training and accreditation of BEWs, key farmers and farmer learning sites.
- Based on DAs upland policy, the DA will design a nation-wide sustainable agricultural upland development programme to support the implementation by LGUs and upland communities

Costs based on UDP experience

Landuse based barangay development planning

Training cost for an MLGU team to facilitate barangay landuse/development planning is estimated at **Peso 200,000**. This is a hands-on training during 40 days with a landuse based barangay development plan as output and covers the costs of the NEDA/HLURB accredited CSO for building the necessary capacity with the LGU in helping its barangays in formulating the barangay landuse plan within the context of a BDP. The cost for preparing such plans per barangay assuming the facilitation by the MLGU team is taken care of is estimated at **30,000 Pesos** (meetings, stationeries, meals etc)

Barangay forest protection schemes

Investment per barangay (for perimeter surveying and monumenting, fencing, bill boards, incentives to Bantay Lasang, EAC by CSO/NGO) depends also on the size of the area agreed to be protected or reforested. Roughly such cost may vary between **50,000 to 100,000 Peso**. Annual maintenance and protection costs per barangay are estimated at **Peso 50,000**.

Agricultural extension and upland farm inputs

Initial investment cost for establishing the system (meetings, trainings, transport facility – optional-, equipments/tools for extension workers etc) is estimated at **Peso 150,000**. The

annual cost (mainly salaries, transport costs, refresher trainings, upgrading skills), per barangay for operating the system at **200,000** Pesos

Barangay labour based routine maintenance schemes

The financing of the maintenance schemes will be a joint effort of the B/M/PLGU and they will, according to their capacity, share their internal revenue mobilisation funds as well as IRA funds for that purpose. Investment costs in tools for and training of maintenance crews is estimated at **Peso 25,000 per barangay**. Actual maintenance costs at **40,000 Peso** per kilometre per barangay per year.

Per municipality

Assumptions

- 5 upland barangays per municipality
- Forest protection schemes average 50has
- 100 farmers per barangay to be supported
- 10 km of road to be maintained

One time investment

Landuse based BDP:	Peso	350,000
Forest protection schemes:	„	375,000
Agricultural extension:	„	750,000
Farm inputs (seedlings)	„	1,500,000
Barangay road maintenance	„	100,000

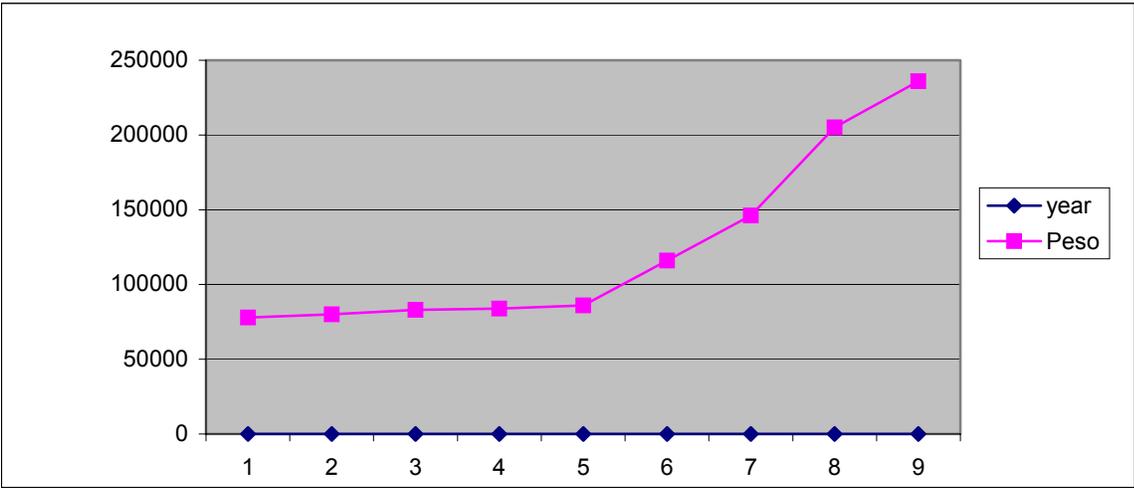
Total investment **Peso 3,075,000**

Annual recurrent costs

Forest protection schemes:	„	250,000
Agricultural extension:	„	1,000,000
Barangay road maintenance	„	1,000,000

Total annual recurrent cost **Peso 2,250,000**

As a result of improved extension services and seedling inputs to farmers, it is projected that for a 3 ha farm, which presently generates income of say peso 75,000/annum, the income over the years in Pesos will increase as follows:



(2000 prices)

- 1. 78,000
- 2. 80,000
- 3. 83,000
- 4. 84,000
- 5. 86,000 (fruit trees start to bear fruit for sale)
- 6. 116,000
- 7. 146,000
- 8. 205,000
- 9. 236,000