

# Painting the Town REDD-PLUS?

*Competing Narratives on Forest Tenure, Land Rights, and  
REDD+ within Contentious Politics in the Philippines*

Mary Ann Manahan | IOB Alumni Seminar | March 20, 2018 | DLSU



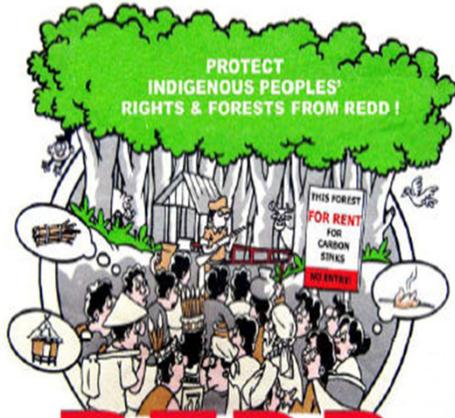
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# Outline

- Introduction
- Theoretical Map
- The Philippine Context: National REDD+ Strategy/Process
- Grounding REDD+: case of General Nakar and EU-REDD Community Carbon Pool Project
- Key Findings and Analyses
- Conclusion





# REDD

**A FALSE SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

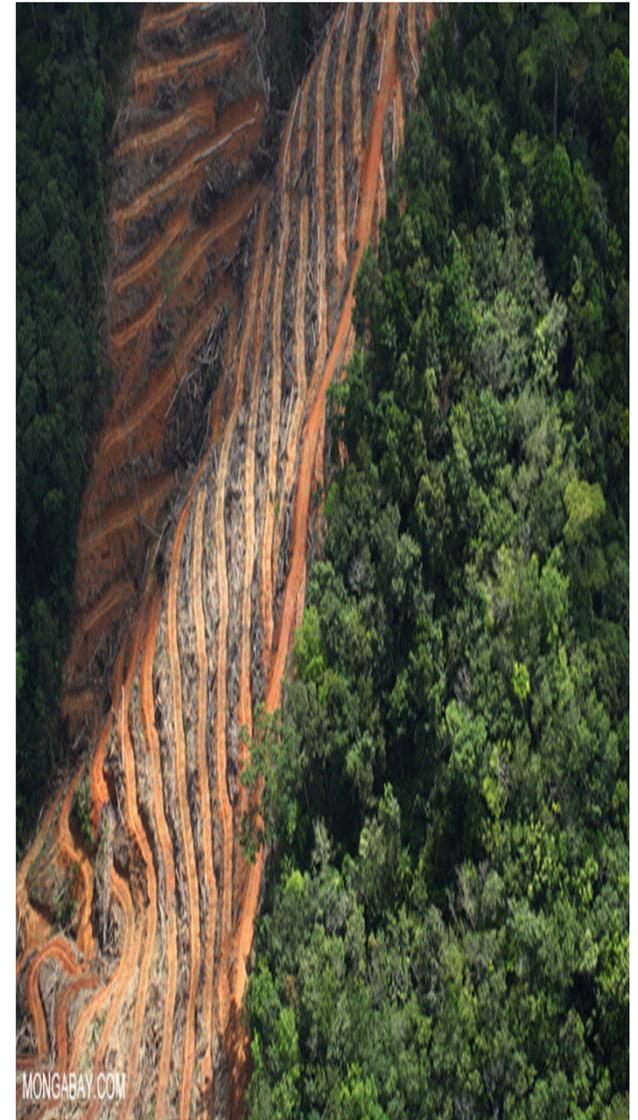
"could unleash a devastating wave of further forest loss, land grabbing, corruption, cultural destruction and conflict." Indigenous Peoples "risk displacement, violence and lost of livelihoods."<sup>10</sup>



# Introduction

# Why the Research Topic

- Urgency of climate change
- Forest degradation and deforestation as major cause of global carbon emissions, global warming
- REDD+ as the latest policy tool: *new black*
- Philippines as a staunch advocate of REDD+ at global level; massive deforestation & ecological crises as development problems; multiple, overlapping, and competing forest & land tenure systems
- **Key concern: consequences on forest tenure and land rights of local communities, indigenous peoples**



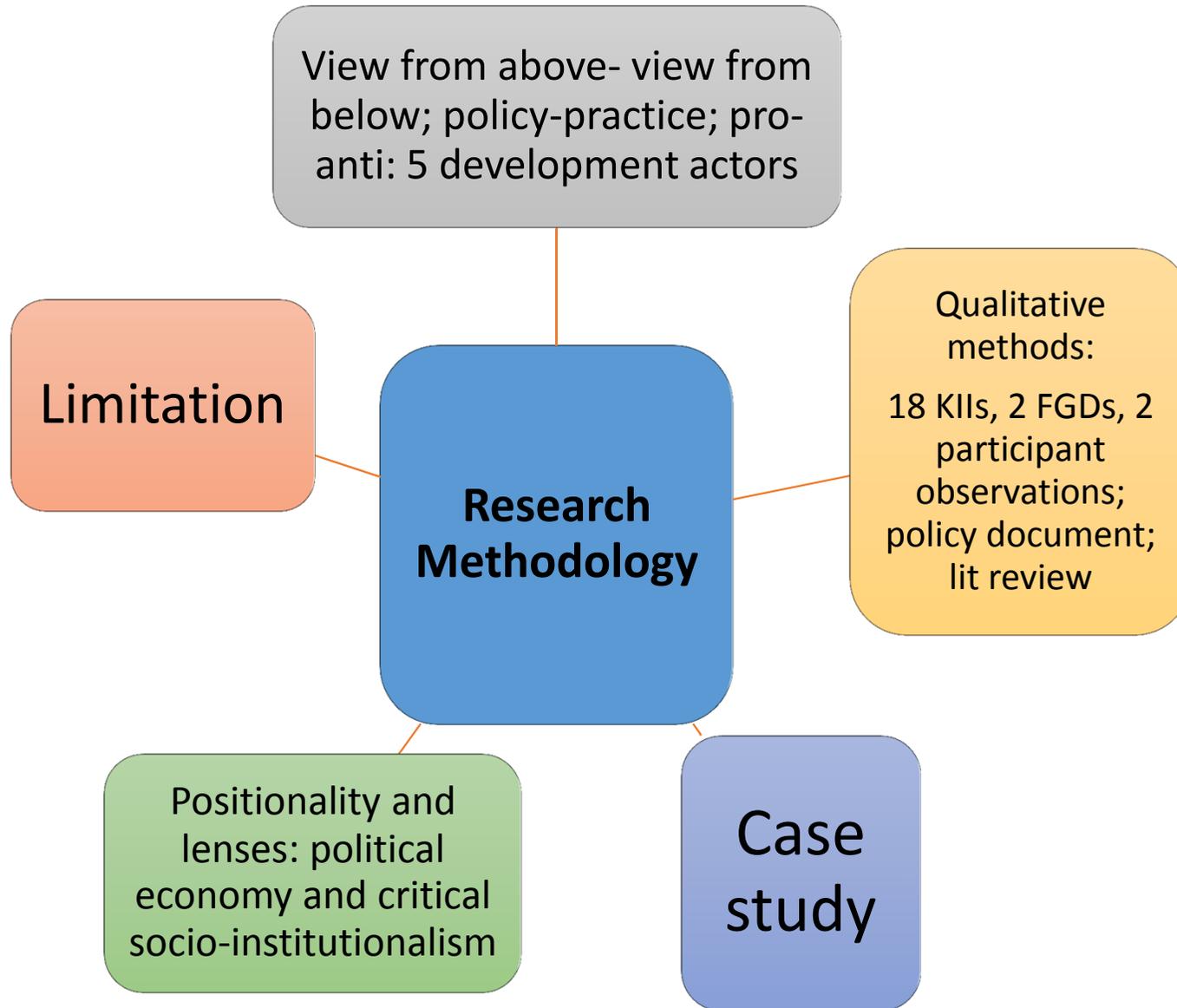
# Research Questions



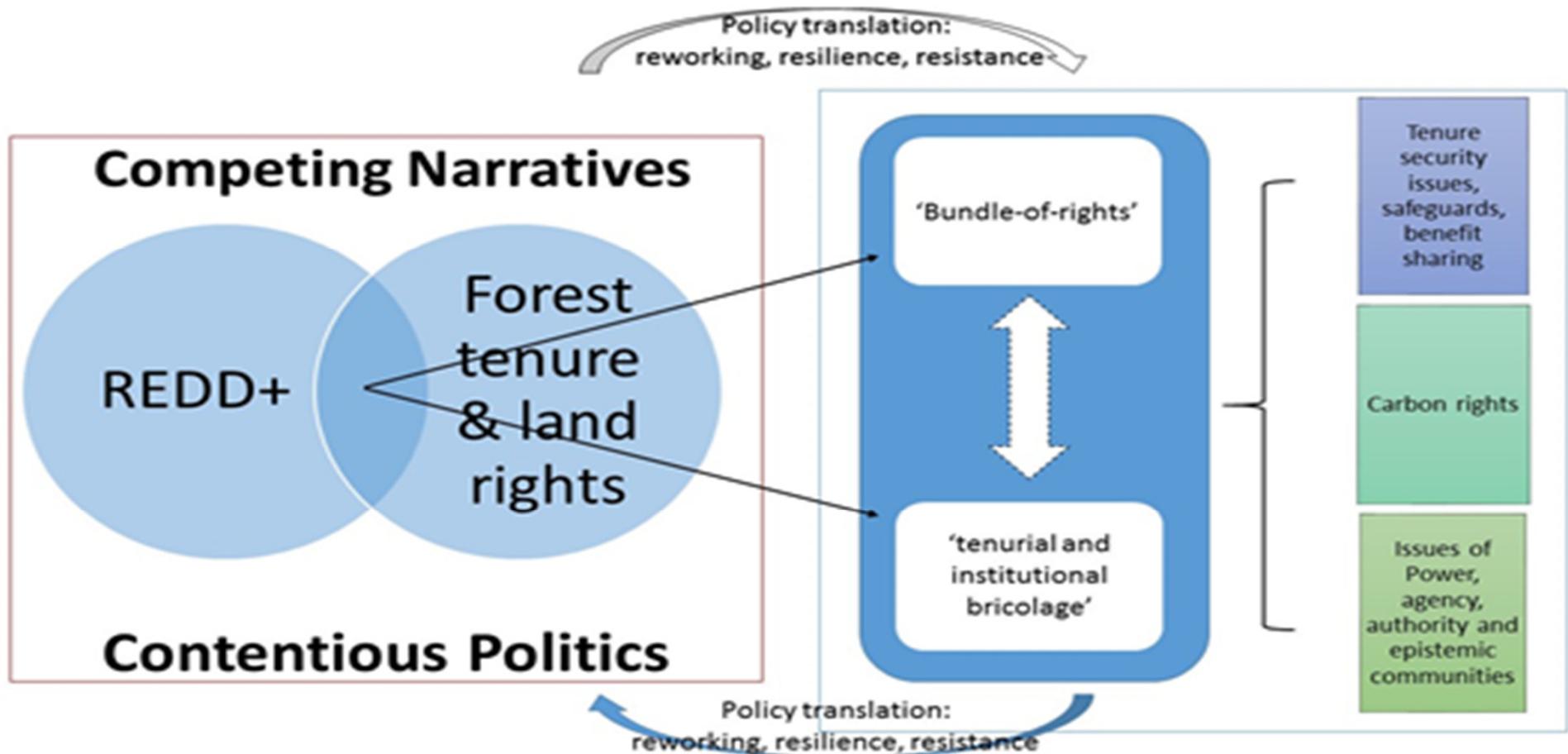
- **How are forest tenure and land rights framed within REDD+ in the Philippines?**

*Sub-questions:*

- who is able to frame the problems and set the rules? how do they do so? to what end? why is it possible to do so?
- who is losing out and benefiting?
- how are these frames translated into policy on the ground? (global-to-local)



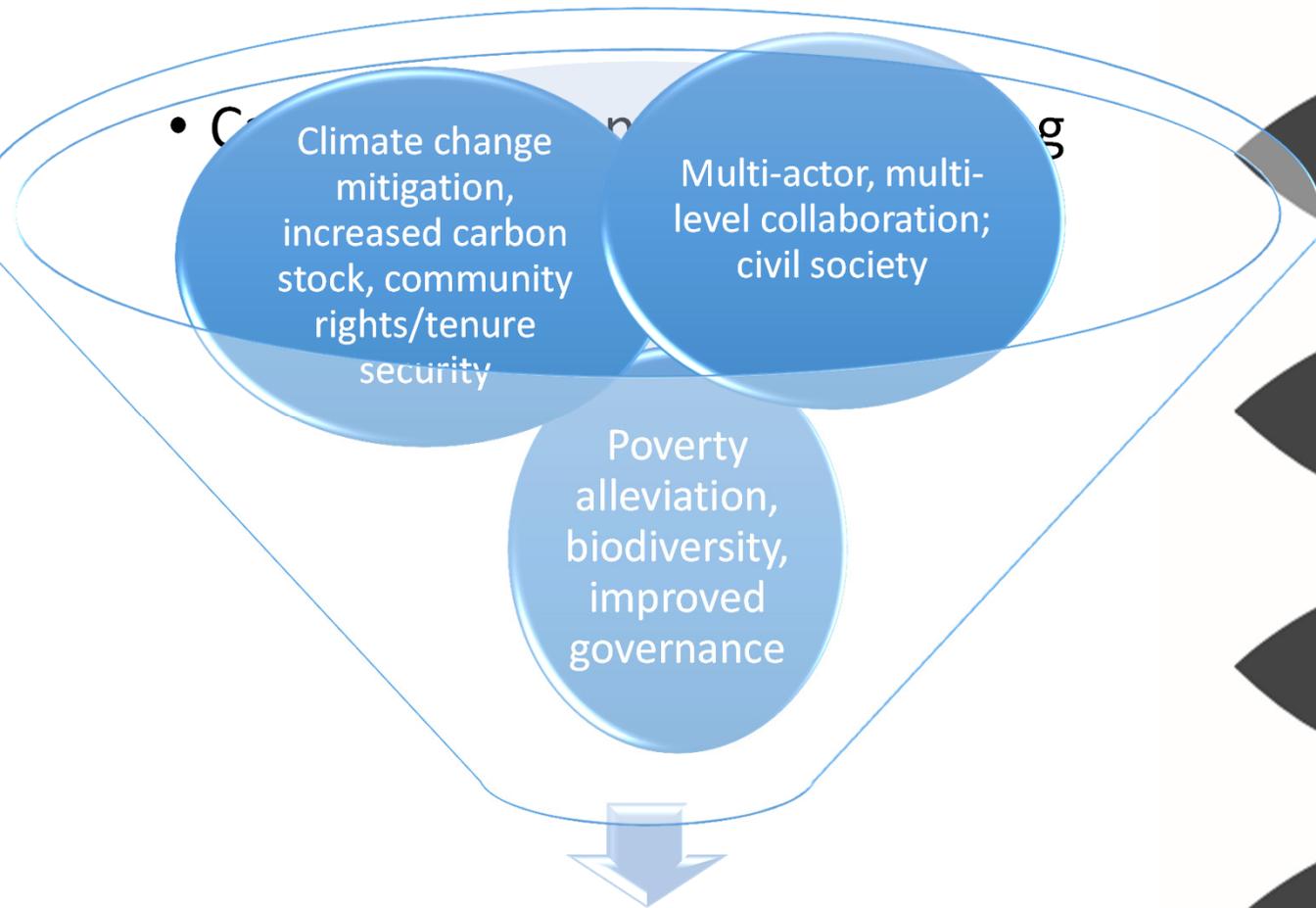
# Theoretical Map



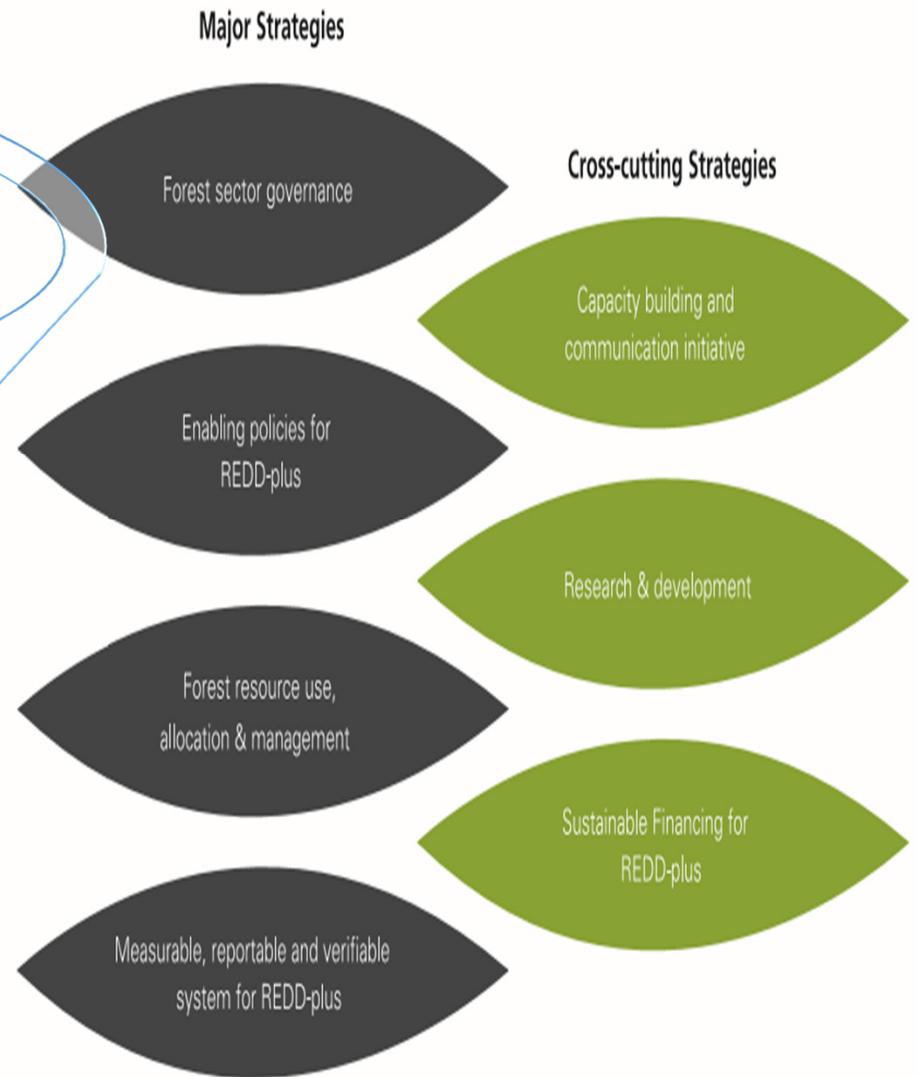


# The Philippine Context

## National REDD+ Strategy/Process

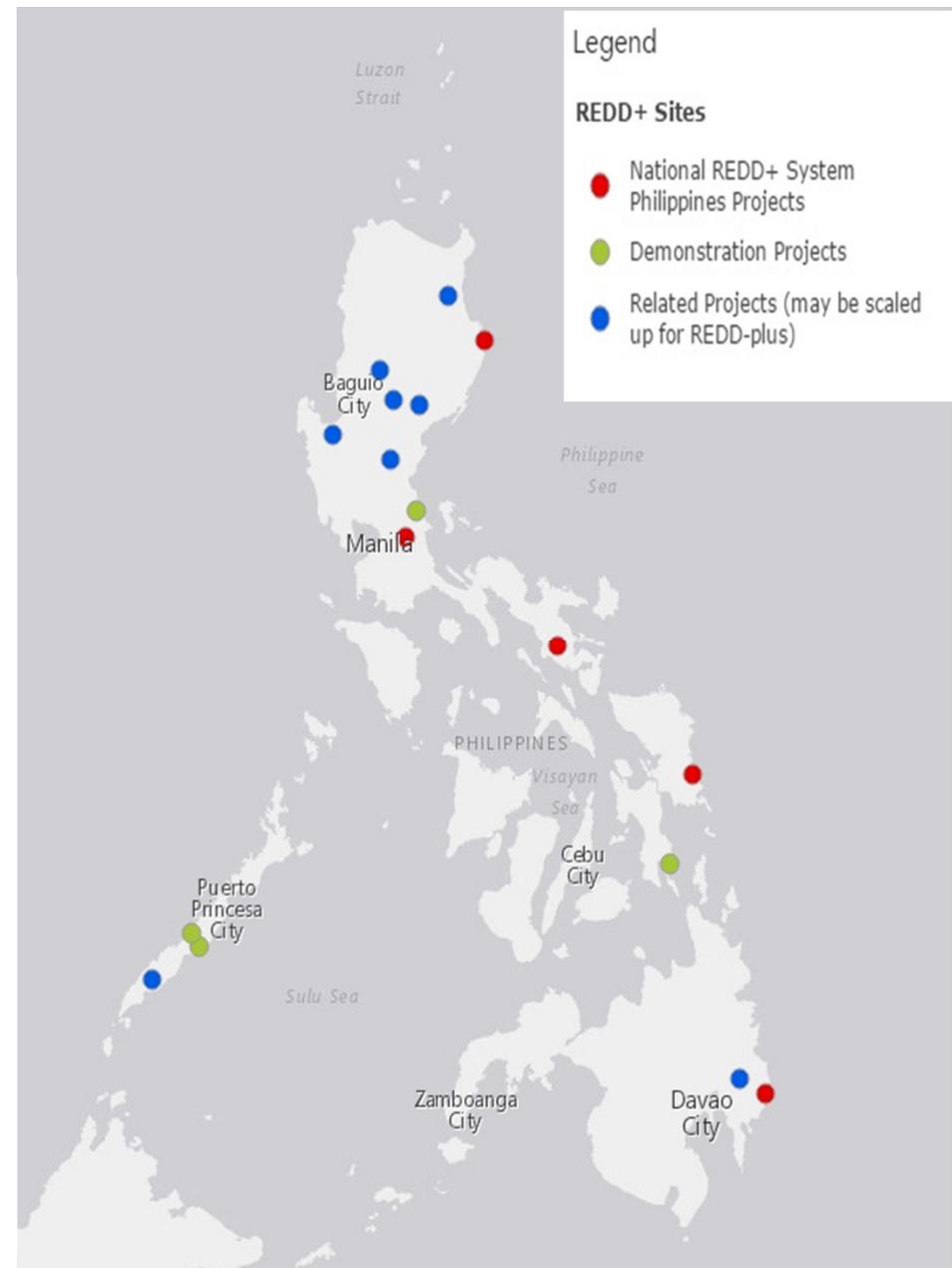


# Philippine National REDD-PLUS Strategy

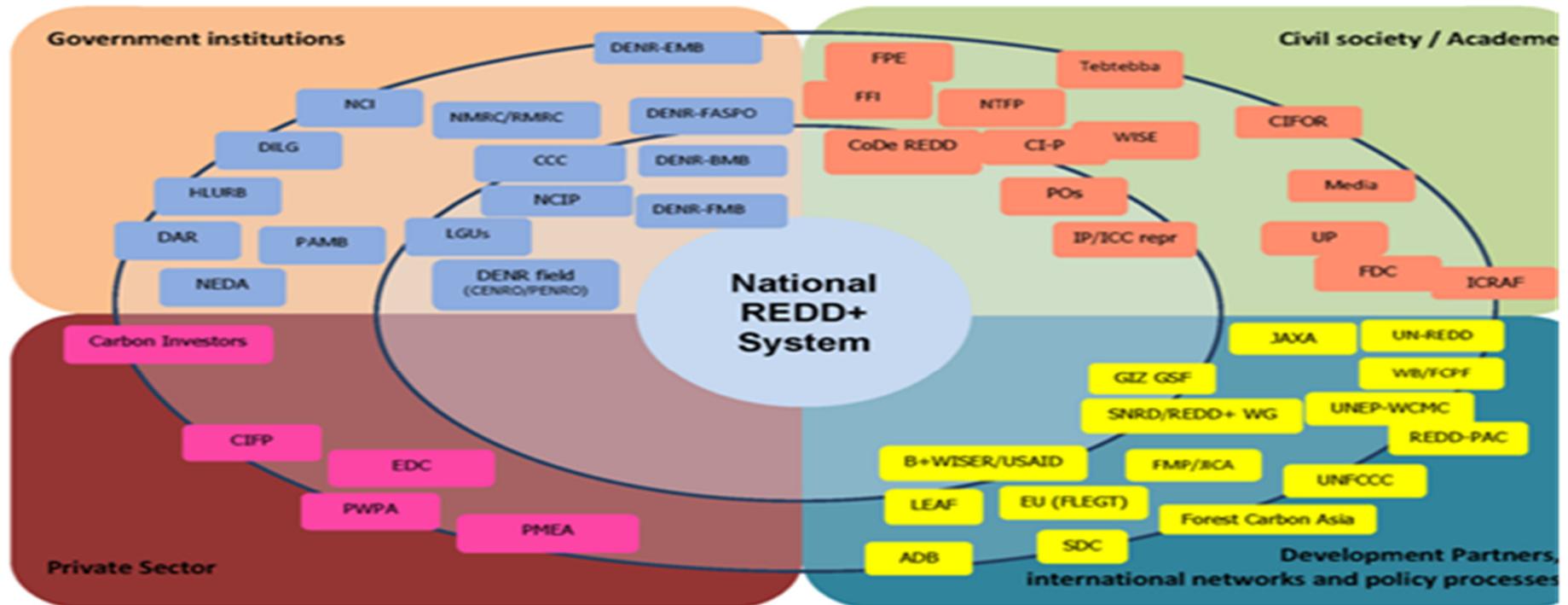


# State-Society-Development Partner Interactions

- 14 project sites covering 14 provinces, 26 municipalities, 3 protected areas (natural park and watershed reserve), and majority are in indigenous peoples' ancestral domains
- Presence of robust civil society or 'coalition of the willing' (CoDE REDD) that advocated and lobbied for pro-community and pro-conservation REDD+
- Formal alliance (*see next slide*)
- Bankrolling of projects: > EUR 12.1 M
- Policy environment (EO 881 and regulation of forest carbon projects)
- Tensions in relationships/interactions



# National REDD-Plus System Cooperation Landscape



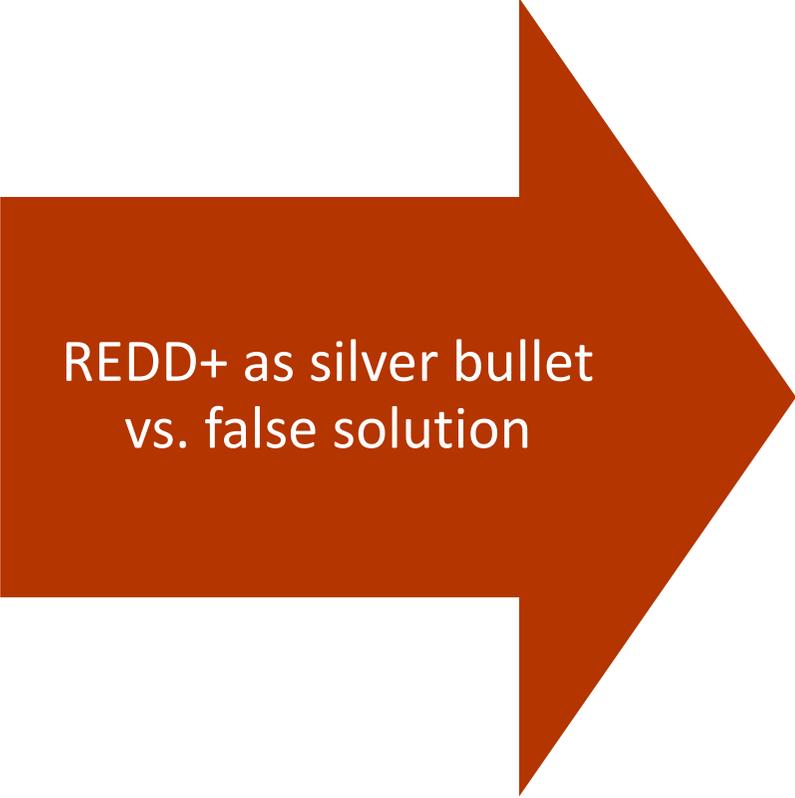
ADB: Asian Development Bank; B+WISER: Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience; CCC: Climate Change Commission; OFP: Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines; CI-P: Conservation International - Philippines; CIFOR: International Forestry Research; CoDe REDD: Community Development through REDD-Plus; DAR: Department of Agrarian Reform; DENR: Department of Environment and Natural Resources; DENR-EMB: DENR-Biodiversity Management Bureau; DENR-CENRO: Community Envoys and Natural Resources Officer; DENR-EMB: Environmental Management Bureau; DENR-FASPO: Foreign Assisted Special Project Office; DENR-FMB: Forest Management Bureau; DENR-PENRO: Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer; DILG: Department of the Interior; EDC: Energy Development Cooperation; EU FLEGT: EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade; FDC: Forestry Development Centre; FFI: Fauna & Flora International; FMP: Forestland Management Project (JICA); FPE: Foundation for the Philippine Environment; GIZ: Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH; GSF: Green Sector Forum, includes Conflict Sensitive Resource and Asset Management (COSSRAM), Forest and Climate Change Policy (ForClim Policy), Environment and Rural Development (ERD) and Protected Management Enhancement (PME) programs and projects; HLURB: Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board; ICC: Indigenous Cultural Communities; ICRAF: World Agroforestry Centre; IP: Indigenous Peoples; LEAF: Limiting Emissions in Asian Forests; LGU: Local Government Unit; National Convergence Initiative; NCIP: National Commission on Indigenous Peoples; NEDA: National Economic and Development Authority; NTFP: Non-Timber Forest Products; NMRIC: National Multi-stakeholder REDD-Plus Council; PME: Philippine Mining/Exploration Association; Provincial Multi-stakeholder REDD-Plus Council; POs: Peoples' Organizations; PMPA: Philippine Wood Producers Association; JAXA: Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency; JICA: Japanese International Cooperation Agency; REDD-PAC: REDD+ Policy Assessment Centre; SDC: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation; SNRD: Sector Network Natural Resources and Rural Development Asia (GIZ); UN-REDDO: United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries; UNEP-WCMC: Nations Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre; UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; UP: University of the Philippines; USAID: United States Agency for International Development; WISE: Women's Initiatives for Society, Culture

Source: GIZ (2014)

# Competing Narratives



Carbon rights & carbon trading (benefit sharing) linked to forest ownership/tenure



REDD+ as silver bullet vs. false solution



# Grounding REDD+: General Nakar & EU-REDD Community Carbon Pool Project

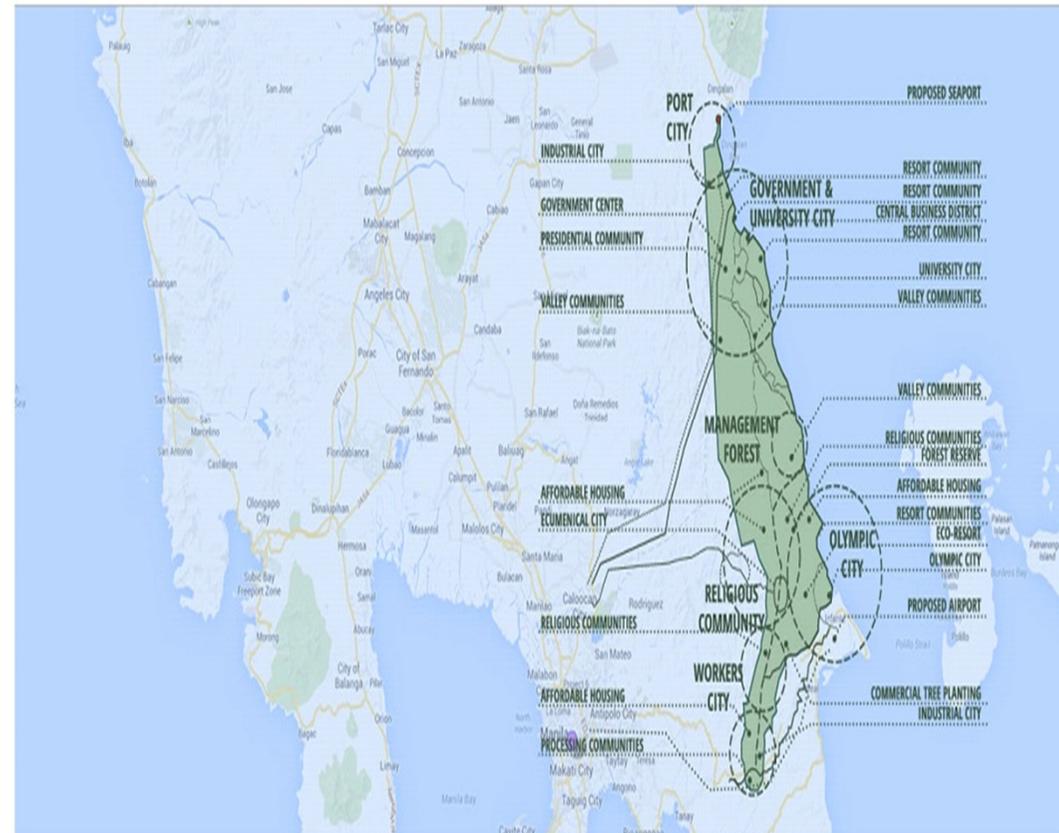


# General Nakar's Profile

- Largest remaining, contested agrarian & forested area in Luzon (i.e. 161,640 hectares)
- Biggest municipality in Quezon province: 94% of the lands classified as forested lands, remaining 6% as alienable and disposable lands (privately titled and owned)
- LGU earns an annual income of roughly EUR 1.26 million; major sources of livelihood from agriculture, fisheries, forests and natural resources, and services
- Based on the 2015 census, population of 29,705 people (PSA, 2015), 13% of which belongs to indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples of Agta-Dumagat and Remontado tribes (lives in 8 out of 19 barangays, with 32 indigenous cultural communities made up of 15 families minimum)
- The indigenous peoples claim 90% of General Nakar as their ancestral domain: *“If there’s no more forests, the Dumagat will perish”- a chieftain/Kaksaan*

Figure 5. Planned Pacific Coast Cities Ecozone Project

- Major challenges in the area— all related to land-based social relations and forest tenure, land use, and land rights issues, esp. **competing claims, land use, and land allocation involving multiple social actors** (i.e. LGUs, indigenous peoples, settlers/Tagalogs, real estate developers, national government, etc.)

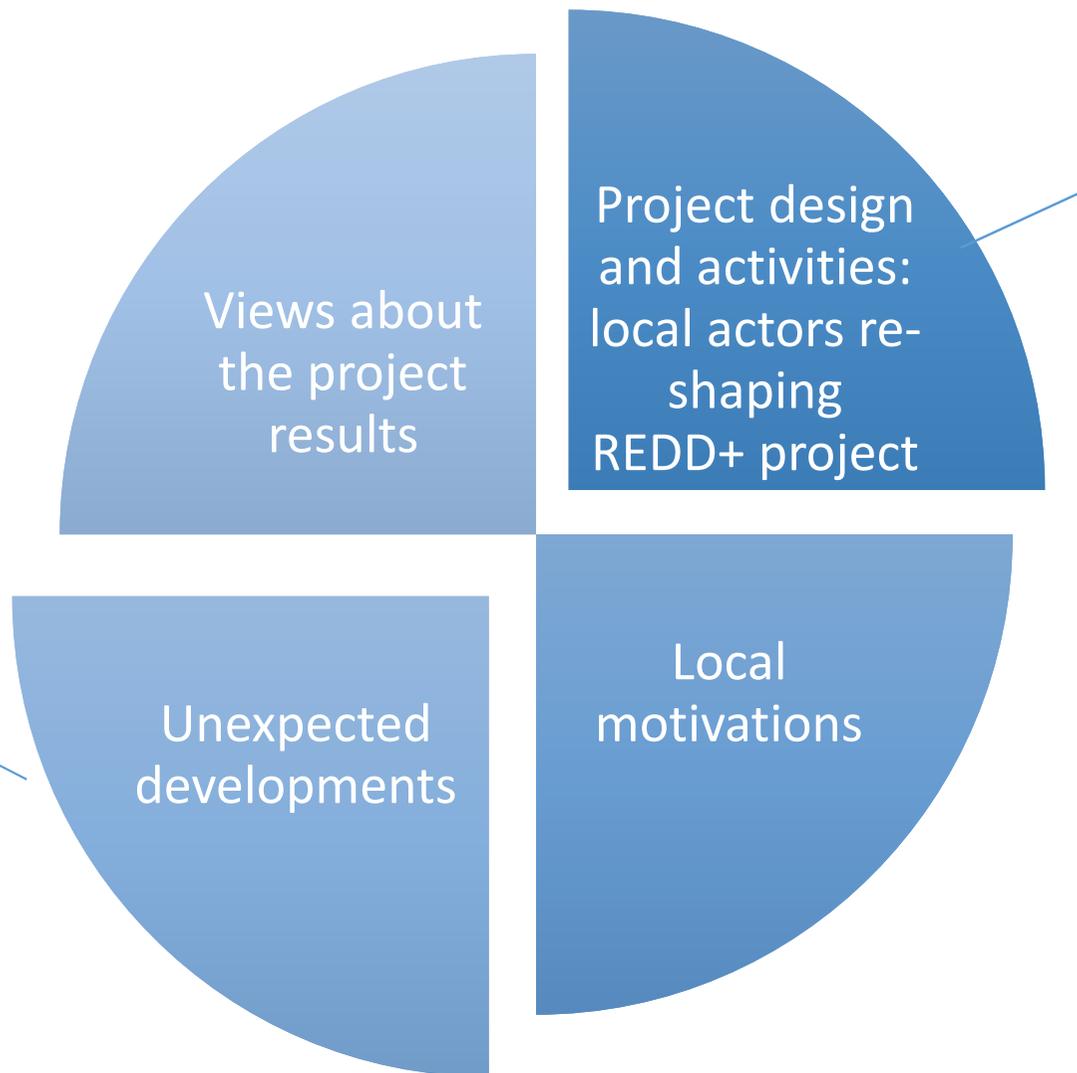


Source: Pacific Coast Cities (2016).

# EU-REDD Community Carbon Pool Project

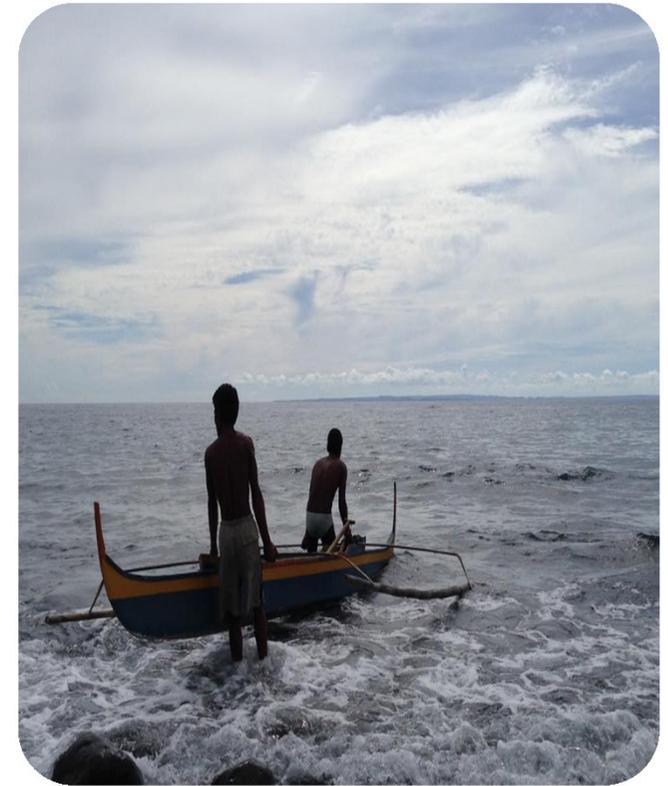
- General Nakar as one of the demonstration sites for REDD+ readiness and piloting of the national REDD+ strategy
- EUR .4 million covering 144,000 hectares of ancestral lands of Agta-Dumagat and Remontado (2011-2014)
- Develop national REDD-plus policies that strengthen the community participation and the role of local governments in forest management; develop community carbon pools and benefit sharing mechanisms





***“there are two competing views on REDD+ in the community”*** - Jun Pascua, organizer/leader

***“We requested the formulation of our ancestral domain management plan in the project (...) livelihood (...)”***  
- Ramcy Astoveza, indigenous leader, former part of NCIP



# Analyses and Key Findings

# (1) Centrality of Forest Tenure and Land Rights within REDD+ *but* Competing Narratives



**National:** (a) clarity of tenure for REDD+ effectiveness vs. mechanism for land grabbing, dispossession, etc.; (b) consensus on placing safeguards and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC); (c) forest conservation doesn't need clear tenure as long as local people involved



**Case study:** (a) primacy of security of tenure, carbon rights as secondary; (b) engagement with REDD+ as form of institutional bricolage (tenorial bricolage), i.e. margins to maneuver or strategic opportunism; (c) global debates reproduced, locally

***Competing narratives on REDD+ linked to the multiple, overlapping, competing forest tenurial regimes in the country***

**Table 3: Bundle-of-Rights applied in the context of Philippines formal forest tenure/ land rights and REDD+**

Bundle of Rights	Existing tenurial regimes per forest/land and owner typology				
	State-owned forests †		Private communal lands/ Indigenous peoples' ancestral domains and lands***	Private woodlands	Mineral lands**
	Community-based/stewardship-based including protected areas***	Production forests /commercial use			
Ownership	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Withdrawal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exclusion/Alienation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Management	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Alteration	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benefit-sharing	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Carbon rights*	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

Source: Author's rendering, sourced from various key informant interviews and Gorre, et al. (2013).

† For state-owned forests, government enters into co-production or co-management agreements with the community or private corporations/individuals for a certain period of time. Here, only user/usufruct rights are awarded and not full ownership.

\* Additional rights under the REDD+ forest carbon regime

\*\* Mineral lands are part of the public domain, which means that under Philippine laws, they are owned by the state.

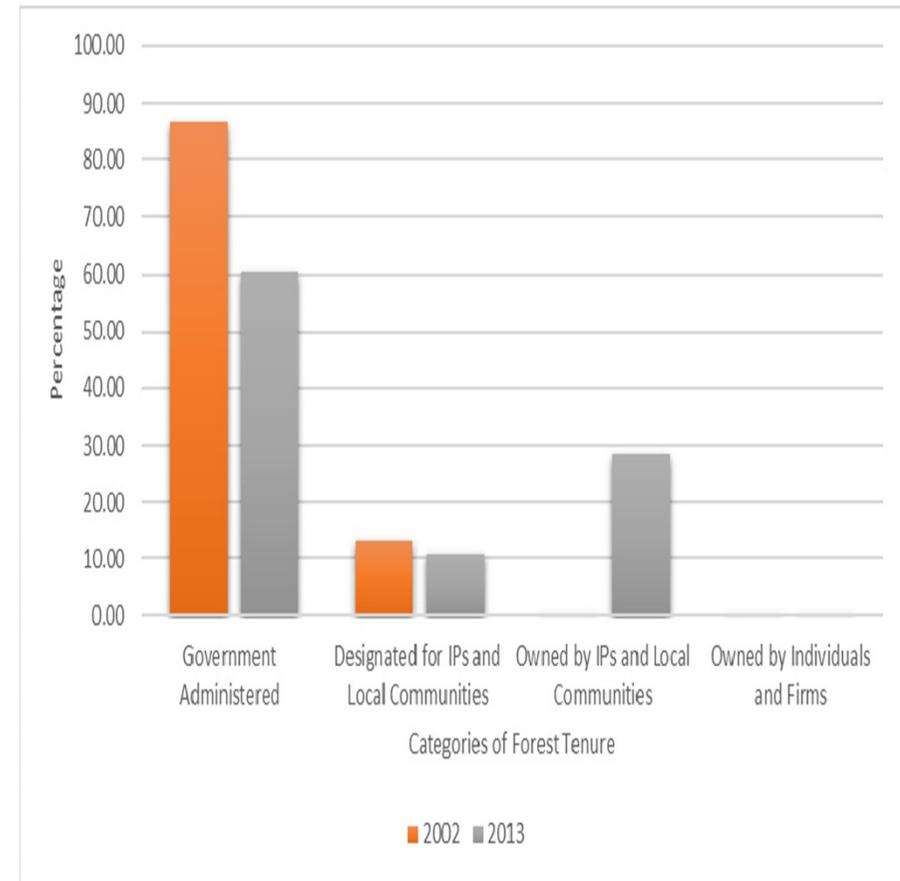
\*\*\* There is an overlap among the indigenous peoples' ancestral domains/lands and community-based forest management agreements, which further complicates and confuses tenurial arrangements on the ground and oftentimes are causes of tensions.

# Who owns the Philippine Forests?

State as biggest *absentee* landlord/owner of the country's forests (Philippine Constitution)

Shift from state to community-based forest management & devolution of forest rights to communities as historical users or managers under customary institutions (democratization efforts & influence of global policies)

Corroborated by recent statistics: IPs & local communities' forest ownership up from 13% or 2 million hectares in 2002 to 40% or 6 million hectares in 2013



Source: Author's rendering, adopted from Rights and Resources Initiative (2016)

## (2) Policy Translation: Orbital with Friction and Contentious Politics

- **No smooth, in *toto*, automatic translation of REDD+ as a global policy into local/national levels: redefined, negotiated, contested and localized**
- While there are competing views based on differing interests, motivations, ideologies, REDD+ gathered an interesting constellation of development actors
- Legitimacy for pro-REDD+ camp via political, social and economic capital
- Role of civil society (+, -)
- **People's agency, the poor's political capabilities to transform power relations but also constraints**



## Different dev't actors with variegated interests & emphases vis-à-vis REDD+

	<b>Supportive of REDD+</b>		<b>Critical of REDD+</b>
<p>Civil society groups, academe, and indigenous organizations</p> <p>(CoDE-REDD, SAGIBIN, TCD, etc.)</p>	<p>Development Partners/Consultants/Contractors</p> <p>(GIZ, B+WISER, Center for Conservation Innovation)</p>	<p>Government</p> <p>(Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Climate Change Commission, National Commission on Indigenous Peoples)</p>	<p>Civil society groups, state officials, indigenous/forest-dependent communities</p> <p>(Philippine Movement for Climate Justice, Focus on the Global South, Integrated Rural Development Foundation, National Union of Nationalist Peasants, etc.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REDD+ as a political leverage/tool for tenure security</li> <li>• As results-based payment/PES; carbon not as primary issue</li> <li>• Emphasis on role of communities in REDD+ implementation/governance, tenure security, safeguards, human rights, and benefit sharing</li> <li>• Value-added is financing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest and biodiversity conservation, carbon rights (linked to tenure)</li> <li>• Fulfilling the technical and scientific requirements</li> <li>• REDD+ contracts for consultants/project implementers</li> <li>• Incentives for local people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon trading/offsets as way forward</li> <li>• Emphasis on fulfilling international climate change and forest conservation</li> <li>• Additional financing stream from development partners or international market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expose REDD+ as false solution and problems with market-based mechanism and carbon cowboys</li> <li>• Emphasis is climate justice: historical responsibility of the developed countries and the Philippines as low emitter</li> <li>• Alternative is systemic change</li> </ul>

Source: Author's rendering from key informant interviews.



Conclusion

Competing narratives around forest tenure, land rights and REDD+ w/ differing motivations, interests.  
**Centrality of forest tenure**

**REDD+ as a site of contentious politics: whose frames prevail?  
different factors**

**Beyond winners & losers =  
people's agency &  
constraints**

Importance of local as site of REDD+ interventions, not as a neat space for the state to manage development (e.g. role of CSOs)

Challenges the top-down/  
bottom-up policy translation: **more dynamic,  
orbital, messy**

**REDD+ also needs to be  
assessed viz. broader policy  
environment & priorities**



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