Daluhay is a non-profit non-government organization based in Baler, Aurora Province, Philippines. We aim to sustain the flow of life by becoming catalysts in strengthening the link between people and their environment from ridge to reef through a multi-stakeholder approach to biodiversity conservation.

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**WARMEST WELCOME TO YOU!**

Magandang Daloy ng Buhay!

This year’s International World Wildlife Day theme on “Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet” resonates well with women whose critical role in building a strong foundation for families living on planet Earth cannot be overemphasized. Several studies have indicated that women often take the lead in helping families adjust to new realities and challenges. As the pandemic continues to haunt the world while we celebrate women’s month this March, I remain hopeful that our forests and its resources, in the hands of our nurturing women, particularly those from the Indigenous Communities, can be saved and passed on to provide for the needs of the future generations.

Sincerely,

Marivic G. Pajaro, Ph.D
Executive Director
Our culture, values and way of life are deeply rooted on the natural resources and biodiversity surrounding us. From our food sources and choices to our traditions and ways on how we perceive our forests and seas. The Indigenous communities have always been the living testament of these connections that’s has been passed down from generations to next. However, for the past years, our natural resources continue to be threatened and in decline because of many illegal and destructive activities in our forests, farmlands, and seas. Our diverse biodiversity and all values and traditions connected to them now more than ever are in peril. The province of Aurora is not an exception to this scenario.

Daluhay, in partnership with our Indigenous communities of Agta, Dumagat, Alta and Egongot with support from the Forest Foundation Philippines and the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples, have initiated an awareness raising campaign to better understand our connection with biodiversity, learn and support their conservation with our Indigenous communities as our guide in a form of a Biocultural Museum. With the restrictions because of the pandemic, the initiative was held in a virtual event. Last March 24, on the International Day of the Forest, a soft launch of the The Ablon: Patungo sa Paghihilom Virtual Biocultural Museum was conducted. The Ablon: Patungo sa Paghihilom Virtual Biocultural Museum aims to showcase Aurora’s Indigenous communities starting with the Agtas of Dilasag, Casiguran and Dinalungan, their traditions and learn from their way of life that helps heal and restore our declining natural resources and biodiversity. Ablon, in Agta’s term is a ritual towards healing and protection. This is the highlight of the event where the Agta Youth showed in a role-play some of their culture and traditions in respect to their deity Apo Atalon, hunting, house building and traditional dances. The exhibit also includes images traditional clothes, weaponry, traditional medicines and diverse plants and animals in their ancestral domain.
Daloy ng Buhay

Daloy ng Buhay is a non-profit non-government (NGO) environmental group from the Philippine phrase ‘Daloy ng Buhay’ which means Flow of Life. We engage in environmental activities because it captures our idea of what we feel our lives should be like — in harmony with the Flow of Life in a way that helps the flow to continue, for our peace and the peace of the world.

Virtual Biocultural Museum

ENTER MUSEUM
The urgent need to set up tight coordination mechanisms to strictly enforce environmental laws and implement forest protection plans in northern Aurora was recognized by participants who recently completed the Environmental Law Enforcement Refresher Training (ELET). About 15 key participants from the northern municipalities of Dinalungan, Casiguran and Dilasag (DICADI) then gathered in February 9, a month after the ELET, to rekindle the embers of the Multi-Sectoral Forest Protection Committee (MSFPC). The DICADI MSFPC meeting was organized by the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) Officer in Charge Forester Mercy Bata and facilitated by Daluhay’s Executive Director, Marivic Pajaro. The participants included senior forest protection staff of CENRO-Casiguran, the officers and staff of the Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Offices (MENRO) of Casiguran and Dinalungan, representatives from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples-Calabgan office, Daluhay, the Agta indigenous communities, the Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representatives and APECÖ.

As a flashback, in the mid 1990’s, the MSFPC emerged as a widely accepted participatory forest protection strategy throughout the Philippines with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at the helms. The formation of MSFPCs began as part of the Monitoring and Enforcement Component of the Environment and Natural Resources Sector Adjustment Loan Program funded by World Bank aimed at forest protection and upland development. Most of the MSFPC were created at the regional level or provincial level, although some were also operating at the municipal and even at the barangay levels. The DENR has spearheaded the creation of an Aurora-wide MFPC also otherwise known as the Aurora Provincial Anti-Illegal Task Force that meets intermittently. The MFPC members serve on a volunteer capacity to help enforce, monitor, review policies and implement development activities that aims to reverse the deteriorating state of the Philippine forests. The MFPC is a participatory model that has a strong potential of being an effective forest protection strategy particularly for northern Aurora’s Sierra Madre forests which embraces the Ancestral Domain of the Agtas which can be considered cultural and biodiversity heritage sites.
March 3, 2021 marks the celebration of World Wildlife Day where youth from different walks of life came together to create art that celebrates wildlife found in the Sierra Madre Mountain Range.
Implementation is a challenging part of a project especially in an organization. To successfully meet the designed objective, there are processes to follow in accordance with the designed activities of a given project.

One of the most challenging part of being conservationist and environmentalists is doing fieldwork activities. Fieldwork commits time, money and willingness of an individual to do the assigned tasks and is further composed of different unexpected things. But at the end, it turns into a great experience. Being an environmentalist is always accompanied by learning new things, experiencing the real situation outside the office while doing research. During fieldwork, the most important materials that a fieldworker must have are: camera, notebook, and pen. It is very useful especially for the documentation and data collection to record an actual state of a particular place as part of the objective of the activity.

“Based on our experiences, life in the field is a combination of excitement, and eagerness to find out what kind of learnings, challenges and experiences that we might have from the activity.”

One of the challenging fieldworks we had was when we conducted Forest Resource Inventory in the Ancestral Domain Forest in San Luis together with the Indigenous Forest Guards. The whole morning was spent in preparation of all materials and logistics needed for a five-day activity. We went off from the community proper at around 1 o’clock in the afternoon carrying our own backpacks and other personal things. The hiking lasted for almost four (4) hours with a distance of approximately 20 km considering the steepness and muddy trails we followed. The weather suddenly became unfriendly and heavy rain accompanied us until we reached the target location. We crossed rivers with huge scattered rocks!

An adventure, indeed! The slippery and steepness road, the scattered leeches along the trails we follow, the sounds of cicadas and other nocturnal animals at night and the heavy rains are the experiences and memories we never forget as a fieldworker. And as a conservationist, the riches and the diversity of life within the forests, and the people who depend on the resources from the forest serves as our inspiration to continuously take action to all the life forms flowing.
THE TEAM

The DALUHAY team consists of a dedicated Board of Directors, other volunteers and contractual front-line community workers applying their passion for sustainable development through contractual opportunities. Current team members and their areas of overall contribution are:

DALUHAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Sharon Teh, Chair of the Board
- Paul Watts, President and Vice Chair of the Board
- Purisima Juico, Secretary/Treasurer

THEMATIC BOARD MEMBERS

- Joanna Imson-Lim, Maternal and Child Health
- Eulalio Guieb III, Community Development
- Melissa Gibson-Villanueva, Biocultural Resilience

ASSOCIATE BOARD MEMBERS

- Matt Blackburn, (United Kingdom)
- Andrea Ulrich, (Switzerland)
- Gian Valenzuela, (New York)
- Alex Sipho Stuart, (United Kingdom)

FRONT-LINE COMMUNITY WORKERS

- Marivic Pajaro, Executive Director
- Mark Edison Raquino, Research & Development Coordinator
- Marilyn Dela Torre, Forest Specialist & Researcher
- Mary Shan Faye Alejos, Communication and Livelihood Specialist, Researcher & Q Editor
- Ria Esteves, Community Development Coordinator
- Daniel Amores, Community Development Assistant
- Jeffrey Natividad, Community Networking Assistant
- Marco Yambot, Administration & Finance Officer
- Karen Joy Virrey, Bookkeeper
We’d love to hear from you!

Did you enjoy reading any of the articles? We are open to your insights regarding our stories. Do you think we can collaborate in the future? To learn more about our projects and activities, you may visit our website www.daluhay.org or you can send us an email at daluhay@gmail.com. We will get back to you as soon as we can.

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