

Traveler: Goro Uehara

Itinerary: Dili and Baucau, East Timor

Period: April 9 - 16, 2005

C.L. Cheshire, Hal McArthur and I were advised upon our arrival at noon on the 11th of April in Dili that a meeting with the USAID Mission Staff had been arranged at 2:30pm that day. This was our first meeting with Mission Director Flynn Fuller and Senior Economic Development Advisor, Stephen Vance. Others present at the meeting were Chip Oliver and Angela Rodriguez. The meeting was brief and Mr. Vance advised us that the Mission was interested in seeing the project focus on a few items that would leave behind lessons learned for MAFF and its clients at the end of the project. The Mission had also arranged a series of meetings with other donors including the European Union, Australian, Japanese, Portuguese, and German representatives. The purpose of these meetings was to avoid duplication and whenever possible to leverage resources to achieve common objectives with MAFF. We agreed to meet again with Mr. Vance before leaving the country.

On Tuesday, April 12, Angela Rodriguez stopped by the Hotel to hand us copies of "Part 1: Rapid Assessment of Progress for USAID," a review of our project prepared by Bryan Gorddard, Agriculture Specialist, World Bank Transition Support Project. Although the writer states that his observations may well be misinformed or otherwise flawed, he concludes "The UH project in its present form sits somewhat uneasily across the new USAID Strategic Framework for East Timor." It is clear that the reviewer believes that the work initiated by Andre du Toit is a duplication of other micro finance projects. This interpretation differs greatly from our aim to identify income-generating options for villagers along steep agro climatic gradients in the Seical watershed and to transfer the lessons learned in this watershed to all other watersheds in East Timor by analogy. This important principle of technology transfer by analogy and its relationship to making soil and climate maps accessible to MAFF personnel was not conveyed to the reviewer and is not yet understood by the Mission. Although this principle is clearly stated in our brochure and our initial proposal to the Mission, few realize that without this principle, all site-specific trials performed by MAFF and donors will continue to be transferred to other locations in the country by the slow, costly and error-ridden method of trial and error.

For the remainder of the project, our most important task should be to enable MAFF to replace its current method of transferring agricultural technologies from its experimental sites to other locations in the country by trial and error with transfer by analogy.