

Travel Completion Report Jan 12 to 23, 2005

Traveler: Gordon Tsuji

Purpose:

1. Coordinate project activities on soil survey with those planned by the Land Development Department of Thailand;
2. Present revised action plan and budget to USAID/Dili with project staff;
3. Observe field activities in Baucau with project staff.

Narrative:

The Land Development Department will conduct their month long training course on soil survey in Thailand and will involve 5 participants from E. Timor. With the minister's concurrence, we will plan on organizing a follow up activity involving these 5 and others on the application and use of the digitized soil map and aerial photo interpretation.

Carin, Andre and I met with Angela at her office at USAID to review the revisions of the action plan budget that we submitted to the Office of Procurement. Carin presented an excel chart outlining each action plan statement with a time frame. Angela requested this be part of our quarterly reporting. Carin and Andre have assembled a spreadsheet that identifies all of our training activities with number of participants, person hours of training, and gender.

We met with Flynn Fuller, new mission director who arrived on the same flight as I did on Monday, Jan 17. After brief introductions among all of us, Fuller asked if UH was planning to do a no-cost extension. I told him we will need to do one. He asked that we do it as soon as possible.

I visited 4 sites, Vermasse, Triloca, Bubu Ana Kala, and Baucau. All four are involved in the land use trial study and Bubu Ana Kala is one of the demonstration trials for corn and upland rice. This is the first time rice has been planted under upland conditions at this location. Heavy rains prevented any further site visits.

Andre and I visited a possible site for the candlenut oil extraction plant at LAHO site in Triloca. This is the silkworm farm site. A candlenut trader who works with GTZ is located 200 meters from this site. It's off of the main highway between Baucau and Dili.

Land Development Department, Thailand

I met with Anukul Suchinai and Taweesak Vearasilp and was provided with the outline of the course. Anukul will be the responsible individual for the training and his director, Mr. Chumpol. At the time of our meeting, Anukul did not have names of the participants. Information on names would be forthcoming from the GoTL ministry of foreign affairs.

Anukul, who received his training in Wageningen expressed concerns of a follow-up as the one month would involve both classroom and field exercises. He felt if the five participants are not involved in any soil survey activities on their return, the impact of their training would be minimized.

They will use only soil maps from Thailand in areas, Anukul described as similar to E. Timor. When asked where he identified Manatuto as a location in E. Timor being similar to Khon Kaen.

Taweesak arranged a meeting with Dr. Andrew Noble of IWMI to look at soil maps of E. Timor. It turned out the maps he has are the 10 quad sheets from the Portuguese soil surveys. Noble has those maps because IWMI was once asked for inputs on water resources in E. Timor. Noble has not been to E. Timor.

MAFF

The Minister indicated 3 MAFF staff will participate in the training and 2 from the Land and Property Division of the Ministry of Justice. Of the 3 from MAFF, Julio Correia was the only name familiar to me. Julio had hands-on experiences with Patrick Niemeyer last May/June.

The minister was receptive to our plans to follow up on the Thai soil survey training with one on the use of the digitized soil map for interpretation and application. After returning to Honolulu and consulting with Patrick Niemeyer, the training may be possible in May or June.

USAID

Flynn Fuller arrived in country to assume his post as mission director on Monday Jan 17. Angela arranged a meeting with him prior to our meeting with her. Fuller has an undergraduate degree in soil science from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and an MS in gen agr from the same institution. He's worked in Peru and Niger. At the latter location, he met Texas A&M staff affiliated with the TropSoils project. He spoke favorably of the CRSP.

Andre briefed him of his activities in Baucau and invited Fuller to visit. He promised he'd do so sooner than later. He thought mid to late February as a possible time. Coincidentally, the minister is also planning a visit to Baucau at or near the same time. He was somewhat surprised to learn of our involvement in the candlenut activity when we mentioned it. My guess is he hasn't had time to read and understand what's going on in depth yet.

Carin later informed us Fuller wanted to meet with all USAID contractors in country the following week after I left. He had only met with the UH project staff among others there.

Itinerary:

January 12 Depart Honolulu

January 13 Arrive Bangkok at 11:35PM. Accommodations at the KU Home.
January 14/15 Meet with LDD and IWMI.
January 16 Depart Bangkok and arrive in Denpasar—accommodations at the Ramada Bintang
January 17 Depart Denpasar and arrive in Dili—accommodations at the Farol Hotel
January 18/19 Baucau
January 20/21 Dili
January 22 Depart Dili for Bangkok via Denpasar.
January 23 Depart for Honolulu via Narita
Arrive Honolulu as scheduled

Travel diary

Jan 12 Depart Honolulu

Jan 13 Arrive Bangkok at 11:35PM

Jan 14 Met with Taweesak and Anukul at LDD at 9. Meeting to 11. Described programs to each other. Thai program for training soil survey runs from Mar to Apr 2005. Contact is at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Five participants are expected but Anukul is not aware of their names. He indicated one prerequisite for the training is a BS in soil science. They will be providing them with academic and practical exercises in the field near Kachantaburi. Anukul's concern is that shortness of the program and no follow up. He is attempting to seek added time so he could do the followup by traveling to Dili and working with the trainees. I explained how Patrick Niemeyer of the USDA/NRCS is working with us on preparing the digitized version of the Portuguese soil map. He indicated their training would include either or both FAO and Soil Taxonomy. When informed of Patrick's interest, we agreed it would be very efficient if both our programs work with the trainees in preparing and using the soil map. The team of soil survey trainees would be involved in geo-referencing the soil pedons in the Portuguese soil survey report.

According to Taweesak, their program was initiated through government to government contacts at the level of ministries of foreign affairs in both countries. Hence, MAFF may be unaware of the training program. The training of extension personnel, however, did involve MAFF staff so there may be communications among ministries in Dili.

After lunch with Taweesak, I met with Andrew Noble of IWMI at KU from 1:30 to 3:30. Noble is a soil chemist formerly with CSIRO. He assumed the head post at IWMI in Bangkok on Jan 1. He is a close friend and colleague of Gavin Gilman. Our meeting was arranged by Taweesak. Taweesak had indicated to me that Noble had a soils map of E. Timor and had an interest in E. Timor after being involved in the training of extension agents from Timor 2 years ago.

Noble is a strong believer of a participatory approach to helping communities overcome food security issues. His thoughts are not unlike ours. He feels if village communities can rise to the "next" level after achieving food security they will be to improve their

income generation possibilities. When I described what we're doing with the land use study in Baucau, he was very much in agreement with our approach.

He then shared with me a report he prepared after a somewhat similar experience in northeastern Thailand. Farmers in this region were advised to increase the organic matter content of their soil by adding more and more compost. However, while this approach is sound, it becomes somewhat difficult to some farmers as residues are used for other purposes. He studied the chemistry of the system and determined it might be useful to increase CEC and water holding capacity of these sandy soils by adding clay. Turns out there is a ready source of bentonite (clay soils from Lop Buri) that could be transported to this area. After a series of demo trials, farmers in the area now treat the bentonite as a "fertilizer amendment". A newsletter he provided reports on this activity.

Another activity is the mix of organic material, i.e. chicken manure, with phobic material (food wastes from restaurants) to create an organic material that is non-phobic and is being looked as organic material returned from urban areas to the farms. Pure bentonite is used to absorb oils in cooking. These oil saturated bentonite material is mixed with organic material, soil microbes, to breakdown the phobic properties of the oils.

I then met with Attachai and a group in the crop science division of Kasetsart Univ for an open discussion ranging from DSSAT, crop modeling activities on sugarcane, bioenergy, and charcoal making (flash carbonization). There were 4 Thais and 3 Japanese at the meeting. Attachai expressed his desire to extend the use of systems application through distance education type programs.

At 4:30PM, Attachai dropped me off at the KU home and he went to the airport to return to Chiang Mai. He leaves tomorrow for China.

Dinner with Taweesak.

Sat, Jan 15.

Meet with Taweesak for lunch in Chatuchak. Use PC in his office at LDD to access email. Downloaded Rosser's report and agenda for meeting in Honolulu. Met Pisoot in the PM. Regards to Goro.

Taweesak dropped me off at KU home at 4.

Sun Jan 16. Left KU home at 6:20 and arrived at the airport terminal 1 at 6:40. TG431 departed as scheduled at 8:40AM. Arrived in Denpasar at 1:55PM. Checked into Ramada Bintang and sought assistance from concierge desk to acquire Merpati tickets to Dili. Tickets were delivered by Merpati at 6PM. I had \$350 of acceptable \$100 and \$50 notes. The \$50 balance using \$20 and \$10. Learned Merpati didn't care when the smaller bills were printed.

Mon, Jan 17. Left hotel at 6:30AM and arrived at the airport at 6:45AM. Checked in at 7AM. Departed as scheduled at 9AM and arrived in Dili at noon. The minister sat in the

first class section of the flight and was part of an entourage that was met by officials and media. Andre, Carin, and Simone du Toit met me at the airport. After lunch, Carin was informed the scheduled meeting with Angela was postponed to 5PM Tue as Angela was not well. Carin managed to arrange a meeting with the minister on Thursday at 4PM. A meeting with the new mission director was also planned for Thu afternoon. Carin would ask Angela if she'd be prepared to meet with us on Thu or Friday. Andre and I planned to leave for Baucau Tue morning.

Checked into the Farol Hotel.

Met with both Carin and Andre to review the memo submitted to the Office of Acquisition and Accounting (formerly Procurement) outlining the budgetary changes to the support modifications of the action plan. Carin had prepared a spreadsheet outlining the monthly activities of the project with numerical totals relative to training activities and trainees.

We agreed to provide a visual representation to Angela to learn if such a report would help her in monitoring our project activities.

Carin and I met with Jessica Pearl of CRS to hand over Richard Ogoshi's travel expenses report and to briefly review plans of the meeting in Honolulu.

Returned to the Farol at 4PM. Accompanied the du Toit family to the hike up the Jesus Christ monument outside of Dili at 5PM. With the du Toit family, met Fernando at the Dili Club for dinner.

Tue, Jan 18. Met Andre at 9AM. After short stops at the gas station, ANZ Bank, and Lita Store we left for Baucau. Stopped at the Vermasse land use trial site before Baucau. Met with Alexio, his wife and several community members. Francisco joined us and provided interpretative services for our discussion. Alexio expressed interest in including prawns in his brackish water ponds. Andre and Francisco recommended he prepare a proposal that could be submitted to DAI's small grants program. *With an estimated cost of \$3000 to 4000, it would be prohibitive to include in the current project.*

Next, we traveled to Triloka and visited with another land use study site where chickens, pigs and fish are part of a farm system that includes corn, coffee, and candlenuts.

Lunch at Benefica in Baucau at 2PM. Checked in to the Posada de Baucau (Hotel Baucau or the "Pink Palace"). Drove to Andre's residence and met with both Francisco and Fernando to view video of project progress over the past month and plan activities of Wed. Fernando mentioned Deolindo is seeking project assistance in establishing a demo trial with rice(?) in (?). Andre estimated a cost of approximately \$1000 to purchase additional fertilizer. We all agreed to move on this. I would provide justification and discuss with Angela.

In a more general discussion, I learned more of Bob Alexander's tenure last summer. Bob's excessive drinking problem strained relationships with Fernando, Francisco, Carin, and others. The motorcycle he was using was damaged in an accident attributed to alcohol. Seems Bob provided us with misleading information on his work there.

The field office has moved temporarily to Andre's home when he's away or at the dwelling across the road from his home.

Dinner with Andre at the Hotel.

Wed, Jan 19. With Andre, we drove to Gariuai to view a land use trial where trees were planted to become live fences. The site is situated approximately 50 meters from the main road and on the Fatumaca side of the open field in Gariuai. Vegetables are to be planted in the area. Fernando and the Delta Force crew

Next, we traveled to Bubu Ana Cala in Fatulia. Francisco and his crew were planting tree seedlings for a live fence in the area used previously for tomatoes. Fernando and his crew weighed out minor element fertilizer (used for citrus—Zn, Cu) with N as a side dressing for the demonstration trial with corn. With Fernando, Andre and Antonio, we checked on the fertilizer rate trial with 3 varieties of corn, Bici2, Arjuna, and Suriya. Upland rice was also planted for the first time in recent memory at this location. The suco chief and his suco wanted to include this trial planting. We were greeted by the suco chief on arrival at the site. Met Jose Ximines who drove in from Dili where he teaches psychology and logic. He indicated he has over 100 students combined for the two classes. He hasn't been paid yet though.

Heavy rains prevented visits to Uaitobono, Buburaga and Fatumaca. We stopped to wait out the rain at Jose's home in Venilale. However, after an hour of continuous rain, we decided to drive to Baucau for lunch.

Lunch at Benefica for 13. Andre received a call from Jessica Pearl informing him CRS has confirmed his travel to Honolulu via Singapore to Tokyo.

After lunch we visited a fishery site at the Piscenes de Baucau near the Hotel Baucau and the blue swimming pool. The Portuguese built the pool and fish tanks. Then, Andre drove to the candlenut trader's building next to the mulberry operations. Twelve women were there cracking candlenuts. The trader informed us he expected a truck from Kupang later today for a pickup of 21 tonnes of candlenut meat. In a week, he receives on average 10 tonnes of nuts from the communities.

Visited the mulberry operations that is overseen by Australian NGO referred to as LOHA. Loron Ohin Haha Aban. Saw a number of mango varieties from Australia, star fruit, passion fruit, guava (not good), and citrus (mandarin)—small scale.

Finally, we visited Pascual's nursery in Triloka even though we learned from Antonio that Pascual was in Dili today. Andre had vetiver cuttings planted there a week ago.

Returned to Baucau and the hotel at 4PM. Dinner with Andre at 7.

Andre called Carin and confirmed our meeting with the minister at 4PM on Thu. There's a meeting of donors involved in food security at 2:30PM. Meeting with the new mission director is set for Friday at 9:30AM and a meeting with Angela at 10AM.

Thu, Jan 20. Andre and I left the Hotel Baucau at 8:20AM. Traveled to the Agr District Office where he met with Augustino (MAFF/Baucau livestock). Augustino is involved with the land use trials in both Bercoli and Bucoli. John Powley has not interacted with Augustino. To date, Andre has managed to involve MAFF specialists in Crops (Antonio), Forestry (Pascual), Fisheries (Alexio), and Livestock (Augustino). Irrigation is the 5th. We filled up diesel at the Nagara station outside of Baucau. Left Baucau near 9 and arrived in Dili at 11:45.

Andre and Carin participated in a donor's group meeting organized by the World Food Programme at 2:30PM. I declined. Carin met with Angela yesterday at the mission. It was a meeting involving AID supported programs.

At 3:30PM, Carin came by to pick me up and then picked Andre up at the CRS office. Andre received his tickets from Jessica. We drove to MAFF in Fomento for our 4PM meeting with the minister. Before the meeting, met Guenther Kohl in Fomento. Learned he will be leaving ET for Banda Aceh by the end of February. Kohl advised Andre that we could use his import exemption on taxes for the oil extracting equipment and that he should contact her. Bridgida will be in charge of the GTZ program.

Met Deolindo da Silva while waiting to see the minister.

Meeting with the minister followed one in which Curtis Ried participated in. The Minister returned with the PM from Mauritius on Monday (on the same flight I was on). Over 150 participated.

Andre provided an update on progress of the land use study trials. He informed the minister that the program now involves 27 groups. The minister will plan on visiting some of the sites on his return from Los Palos in February.

On candlenuts, he was particularly interested to learn of the current status of the proposed plant. We informed him the feasibility study final report will be made next week in Honolulu. Andre promised to advise him of the outcome. We learned one reason for his interest is the Parliament will be meeting and the PM is supporting a bill to relax taxation on [export] business enterprise such as candlenut. No taxes would be levied for 7 to 10 years. When asked if he was aware of the extent to which candlenut grew in E. Timor, both he and the vice-Minister indicated trees were predominant in Baucau, Vicqueque, Los Palos, Manututo, and Suai.

On the soil map and soil survey training, he was aware of the upcoming training. He received word from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The 5 will be made up of 3 from

MAFF and two from the Land and Property Division of the Min of Foreign Affairs. I asked if he would be agreeable in having a follow-up workshop in E. Timor with those 5 and NRCS and UH on the application of a digitized soil map. We would arrange to have the 5 involved in geo-referencing the pedons described by the Portuguese.

Finally, the Minister informed us he met with Jim Lehman earlier if he thought the project should continue. He responded favorably to Jim. I told him we have considered consulting with USAID on continuation of the program. The Minister was informed that Goro and Hal would plan on meeting with him to develop a plan that contributes toward the goals of MAFF and E. Timor.

Lorenzo informed Andre the donor programs would be moving to another office space currently occupied by the quarantine staff. It's office space on the same side as the minister's office.

Met Julio. He'll be going to Thailand for the soil survey training in March.

Friday, January 21, 2005

Met with Flynn Fuller, new mission director, at 8:30AM. Andre, Carin, Angela and I were at the meeting. The meeting was for about 30 minutes and allowed us to brief him on the project's activities in Baucau and on the relationship of this project with the soil management CRSP. Fuller asked if we planned on requesting a no cost extension. I indicated in the affirmative. He indicated we should do it as soon as possible. Fuller had had interaction with the SM CRSP as TropSoils in Niger and in Peru. He was positive in his remarks about that interaction. Fuller plans on visiting the land use trials in Baucau with Angela possibly in February.

On a possible next phase, Fuller did not promise anything. He indicated it would help to have a supporting letter from the minister. Carin will monitor this request. I informed Fuller if we are asked to do another phase, we'd contribute to the SO of the mission and the plans of the GoET. He then asked Angela to provide us with copies of the AID strategy for 2005 to 2009. She gave a copy before we left.

We then met separately with Angela to review our modified action plan and to review indicators of performance for the project. Carin showed the action plan as a spreadsheet with actions on the vertical and time on the horizontal. Angela felt this was an effective means of monitoring and reporting on progress. We need to add this table with our quarterly reports. Angela is also monitoring activities of NCBA and will be in Thailand from Feb 7 to 12 for meetings. She asked if there was anyone she could meet or see relative to activities in E. Timor. I promised to contact Taweesak to ask if he could arrange a meeting with Anukul and for Taweesak to provide her with information on the use of the soil test kit for corn production. It may be we could have him contact Tasnee. Not sure how far to go.

We left the mission at 11:30. The mission will be moving to the building formerly used by the US embassy on the beachfront. That should be happening before mid-year. DAI has moved to their own quarters as well.

Before our return to the Farol, we confirmed my tickets at Merpati in Colmera. We then met with Fernando at the Farol who was babysitting this day. We provided information to Fernando on possible site visits in Feb by both the minister and the new AID mission director. Richard and Bala would also be around at that time.

Lunch with Andre and Carin at the Esplanada. Very strong winds starting blowing while we had lunch. As we were leaving, we were pelted by strong wind and rain. The winds died down a couple of hours later. Worked on my travel report.

Dinner with the du Toits at the Tropical Restaurant near the new ANZ location.

Saturday, January 22, 2005

The du Toits picked me up at 10:15. Andre and I checked in on the Merpati flight and parted company in Denpasar. He left on Garuda for Singapore and I left on Thai for Bangkok. We met up again in Tokyo. I returned to Honolulu on United and he traveled on Northwest and was scheduled to arrive an hour later. I returned to airport to take him to his hotel in Waikiki.