

Increasing productivity in the Philippines

Over the past 20 years ACIAR has supported more than 100 projects in the Philippines. These projects have resulted in the development of valuable technologies with the potential to increase Filipino farmers' production and income. The broad aim has always been to support improvements in agricultural productivity to increase market access for poorer farmers.

Farmers and researchers in ACIAR-supported projects are working together to increase sustainable farming practices in Mindanao, the Visayas and beyond these areas.

The first Philippines–Australia Landcare project, for example, resulted in the formation of more than 400 Landcare groups and adoption of conservation technologies by thousands of farmers. Plans for expansion of Landcare in the Philippines are outlined in Jenni Metcalfe's report on page 4.

On the island of Bohol, researchers and farmers are also focusing on sustainability issues, trying to improve management of steep agricultural lands.

Several other Philippine projects are reported in this issue – improving timber quality on the island of Leyte will benefit both smallholder tree farmers and local sawmillers, and bamboo is being investigated as a renewable, alternative timber for use in construction and processed timber products.

Over the years a number of ACIAR projects have benefited from the involvement on the ground of Australian volunteers. Roger Beckmann provides an illuminating account of the experiences of three of these volunteers.

A special report on collaborative work between ACIAR and ICARDA is also covered in this issue, and Dr Ken Street explains his germplasm projects in the Caucasus and Central Asia that are aimed at preserving potentially vital genetic resources for world agriculture.

PARTNERS IN RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

Partners in Research for Development presents articles that summarise results from ACIAR-sponsored research projects, and puts ACIAR research initiatives into perspective.

Technical enquiries will be passed on to the appropriate researchers for reply. Reprinting of articles, either whole or in part, is welcomed provided that the source is acknowledged.

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The Philippines

4 LANDCARE TAKES ROOT: The Philippines is starting to embrace the community-based movement that seeks to optimise productivity and conservation on public and private land.

6 OVERCOMING THE SLIPPERY SLOPE: Modern technologies to manage agriculture and the watershed are helping traditional landholders gain a sustainable living on the steep slopes of Bohol.

8 OPENING THE TIMBER DOOR: Learning to produce timber of the type and quality that sawmills demand may give smallholder tree farmers a more reliable income.

10 BUILDING ON BAMBOO: The remarkable grass offers commercial potential as a renewable building material – and as a food.

12 MUSTARD FIGHTS DISEASE: Spectacular results of experiments to control soil disease in tobacco have led a few years later to some surprising benefits for vegetable growers.

Other features

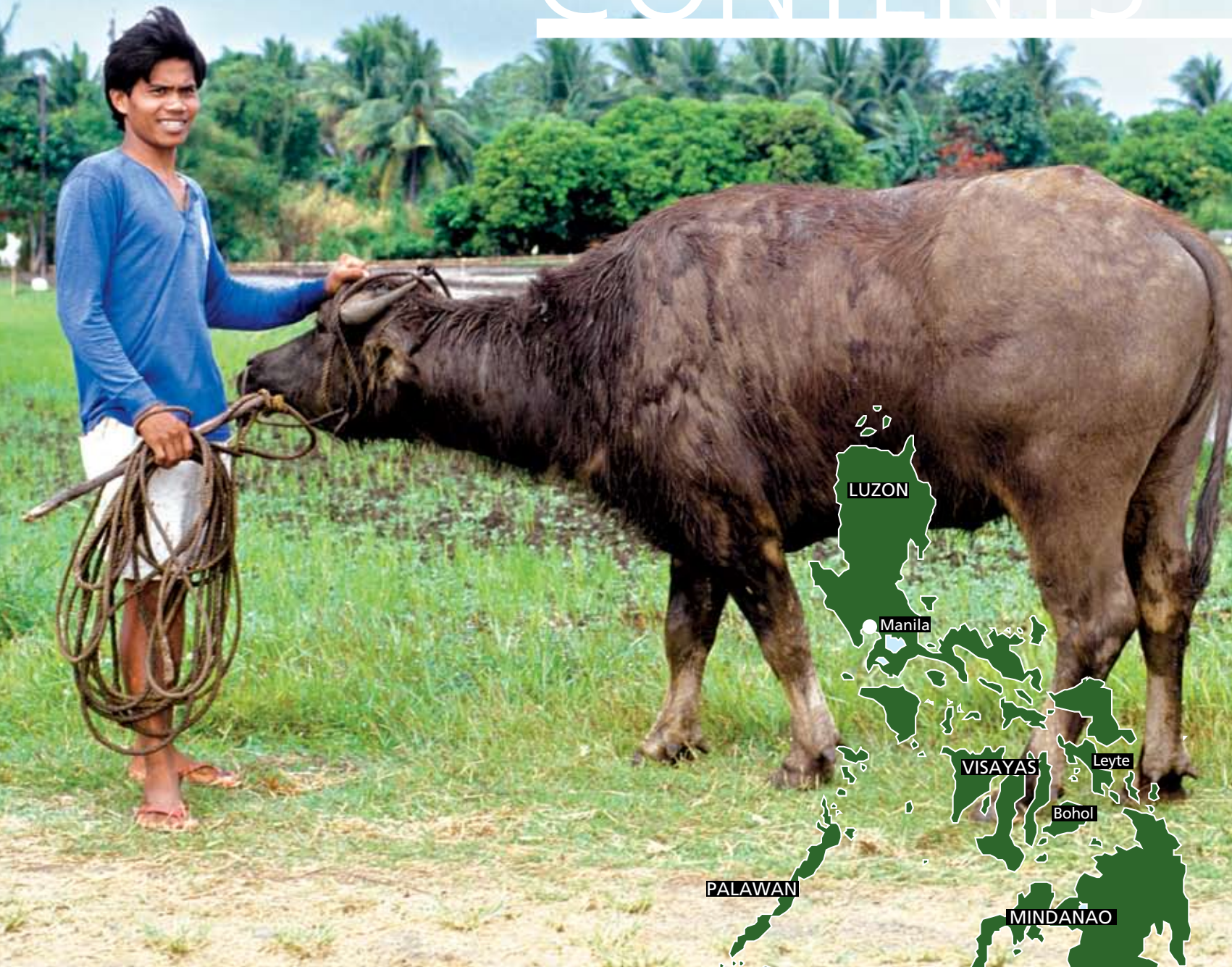
15 KINDEST CUTS: Workshops in pruning and other pre-harvest work are helping Vietnam's fruit growers achieve bigger and better harvests.



16 SCIENCE LIFTS VITAL CROPS: The benefits flow from ACIAR's support of crop research in Syria.

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30 FARRER ORATION: 2005 Farrer Memorial Medal winner Dr John Williams says the agricultural community should not be expected to provide cheap, clean food and fibre as well as a free service to maintain all the ecological functions of the landscape. Plus new appointments, new projects and new publications.

PHILIPPINES

