

Research Directions

Office of Research Services

Managing Soil and Water in the Philippines

Associate Professor John Bavor with colleagues in the Schools of Natural Sciences, Engineering and researchers from the University of Sydney are working with resource management organisations in the Philippines to explore best practise management of soil, water and crops on Bohol Island. The research is made possible through a previous research collaboration and funding from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, the Philippine Bureau of Soils and Water Management and the World Agroforestry Centre.



'Soil erosion and associated loss of nutrients from arable land is an important economic problem in the Philippines and closely associated with ecosystem health and function' says Associate Professor Bavor. 'Within the agricultural province of Bohol, 45% the island's land supports 80% of the island's population. However, nearly two thirds of the agricultural land has a slope of greater than 18% and receives more than two metres of rainfall per year, making it very susceptible to erosion. Previous studies in Bohol concluded that cultivation on sloping land and continuous use of nutrient-depleting crops such as corn and cassava have the highest adverse impact on agricultural and economic sustainability. Improved land management techniques that concentrate on soil and water conservation are therefore likely to decrease soil erosion and improve life for the farmers and their community.'

The project will quantify the farm-level economic benefits that can be realised by implementing soil and water conservation in corn and cassava growing areas. The research will also demonstrate to farmers the farm-level economic benefits of implementing soil and water conservation. Researchers will assess the effectiveness of improved management practices through monitoring and validation of the improved techniques, and education and guidance programs teaching farmers new land management practices.

The project will significantly improve financial returns for farmers in an area of the Philippines that has a high prevalence of poverty. It is expected to also ensure the long-term viability of the Bohol Island area as agricultural farming land to support the island's large population.

Project Title: Evaluation and adoption of improved farming practices on soil and water resources, Bohol Island, the Philippines.

Funding has been set at: \$1,292,708

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