



PROJECT AND BENEFICIARIES

Name of Project	:	Natural Fibers Technology Resource Center
Implementor	:	Aklan State University –CAFES Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
Beneficiaries	:	Povince of Aklan

About the Project

The Province of Aklan is endowed with vast resources and cultures that made her famous in the country and the whole world. The renowned Boracay Island, Ati-Atihan Festival and natural fibers such piña, abaca and raffia are all acclaimed as Aklan’s pride in the international scenario. These resources generate revenues both in tourism industry and fashion sector of the province. Aside from Boracay and Ati-Atihan Festival, Aklan Province humbles herself as home for natural fibers such as piña and abaca, and other natural fibers. For instance, the piña cloth, considered as the Queen of Fabrics, found its beginnings in the province dating as far back as the Spanish regime. The weaving of the piña cloth in the province during this era, has earned a name for Aklan as the center of weaving industry in the Philippines. Other minor natural fibers grown in the province are raffia and bariw which are mainly used by the arts and handicraft sectors. At Aklan State University (ASU), faculty-researchers have developed technologies concerning propagation (e.g. tissue culture), nursery and field management of fiber crops particularly Aklan Piña and abaca and rattan. In partnership with cooperators in the barangays, fiber processing and weaving are open to anyone interested to see the actual processes in the making of piña and abaca cloth. In fact, ASU as Center of Development (COD) in agriculture education has identified Aklan Piña and abaca as its primary cutting-edge technology (CET). Being such, continuous research, development and extension activities are focused on these commodities as well as other natural fibers. Today, due to the demand of the fashion world, traditional fibers and cloths are dyed according to the fashion trend of colors using natural dyes. Value-adding techniques such as application of natural dye on indigenous fabrics like piña, abaca, raffia and others are encouraged because it does not cause hazardous effect to the environment. Naturally-dyed fabrics are non allergenic. Unlike synthetic coloring procedures, natural application process does not pollute the ecosystem, thus, it is environment-friendly. Besides, naturally-dyed fabrics exude elegance and beauty which fully manifest a tropical ambience and origin. Fortunately, ASU has a Common Service Facility (CSF) for natural fibers which complements the research works in the University on dye application to natural fibers. Recognizing the importance of natural fibers in the economic, tourism and cultural aspects of the country, it is high time that a technology resource center for natural fibers be established. Since the University is the prime mover of research and extension undertakings for natural fibers in the province, ASU should be considered as the center for this effort, hence this proposal.