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ABSTRACT

Agrochemical pesticides are inherently toxic that could harm humans, animals, and the natural ecosystem. Stories and unverified reports reveal the use of agrochemical pesticides in upland farming in Mount Mantalingahan Protected Landscape in Palawan. Hence, the study aimed to determine the status or current condition of agrochemical pesticide use in upland farming in the protected landscape. Through site visits and structured interview supplemented by review of literature, the use of agrochemical pesticides in upland farming in Mount Mantalingahan Protected Landscape is confirmed, spatially determined, risks enumerated and understood, and courses of action recommended. The use of agrochemical pesticides in agricultural systems in the uplands of Mount Mantalingahan Protected Landscape (MMPL) is an adaptive mechanism of the farmers in response to the changing circumstances of the people and of the place. While the use of herbicides like 2,4-D was found to have started much earlier, this phenomenon is gaining more ground today as more and more variants of agrochemical pesticides become available. Apparently, slowly but increasingly, the trend appears to indicate that more and more farmers are opting to use agrochemical pesticides to protect the economic objectives of the agricultural production system of the family, primarily ensuring that the potential harvest is not severely damaged by an infestation of weeds and insect pests. Weeds, being the primary problem is a complex one, and is driven by factors such as land use regulation (Policy) resulting to shortened fallow in the swidden system as well as in the sedentary system (technical), exacerbated by the erosion of traditional free labor exchange (socio-cultural) which necessitates the search for alternatives in order to ensure the completion of the production cycle with the end result of a good harvest and hence, survival of the family (economic) which pushed farmers to adopt agrochemical pesticides. Unfortunately, current practices exposed humans, animals, and ecosystem to risk of poisoning. It is, therefore, necessary for the stakeholders especially the management of the MMPL-PAMB to take cognizance of this concern and craft management options to address the risks associated with agrochemical pesticides use in MMPL.

Keywords: Agrochemical Pesticides, Weeds, Upland Farming, Protected Landscape, Swidden System, Adaptive Mechanism