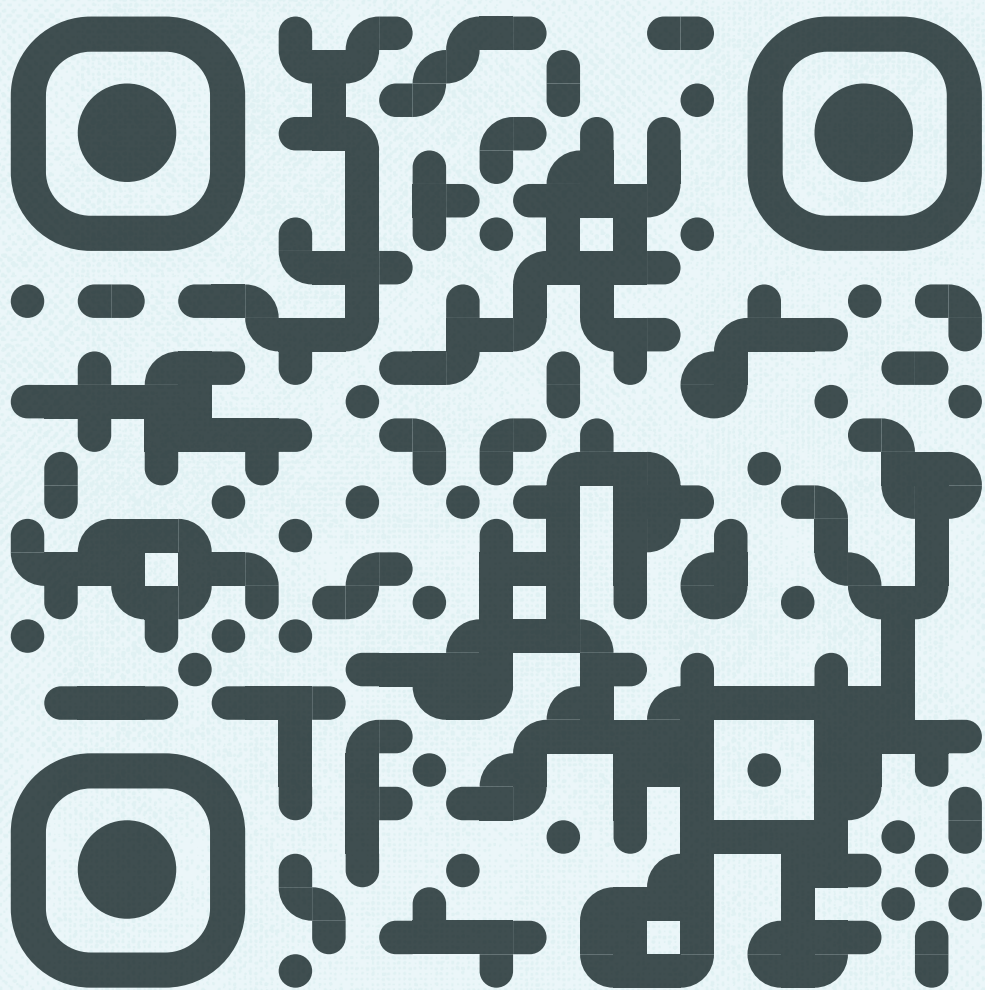




Passing  
the Baton

Surprisingly  
Fun-Loving  
Atayal

matyangulwawadhahe  
ka vai



**原住民族**  
INDIGENOUS  
SIGHT

IPCF  
雜誌

從原住民族的角度看世界  
圖文好看線上版

[inSight.ipcf.org.tw](http://inSight.ipcf.org.tw)

## *rako a vatvatek : mapipakatkat so pilingalingayan do ili*

# Establishment of Business Pattern for Positive and In-depth Indigenous Community Tourism

ya mipeyparo o ya tomalilis do teysa aka maataw a tao do karawan siciakoa ya, na akmey pacilolowan no pikeylilian no yancomin, yaro o ya mangay milingalingay do kakaasan a taotao, ta da ikakza o da kangay miwalam do kabowan no tao a ili. na ikablis no pimeymasawdan no yancomin aka no na ikatazoto no da pinizpian, da naknakmen o ka pia no pilingalingayan aka no piwalamen no tao, aka pakacita da so iweywawalam no yancomin. am tana mian so kapien no vazay am, amian so karaetan no vazay an, makman so da rana sazapen o pinizpia no tao, yarana mablis o pangaktoktowan no tao aka no makdeng a cicirawat no kakoa.

no pinakmen o kapia no pilingalingayan do ili no yacomin am, neymakdeng na vazay am, jito ngonongonoci o pangangavangan, ta panomaen o ngongyod a kapia no malovot a asaka ili, aka pangozay da do iweywawalam no makman sira dehdehdeh.

ya domket do vakong no 《原視界》 o vazay na no malavayo a Rokay si Muni Druluan, nimangay do ili do 司馬庫斯 a macinanao do vazay do iseyanan, tana sidongen na sira o malavayo a mapatnek so piveyvazayan do ili am, ma' ap na o vazay do ili a mowyat a mapiamoamoon so iweywawalam, kakmey asa da tao a malovot a mapakatkat so pimasawdan da asaka ili, yatey apia o da aapan sia so vazay a makeykeylian.

o ya mangay milingalingay do pikeylilian no yancomin a dehdehdeh am, inaway no ngongyod sira maka topos do pimeymasawdan no yancomin, a yaten a tao do ili am, ononongan o makakaday a iweywawalam do do keymimili takamo, ipipakatkat no panaotaowan so omranes do ili a dehdehdeh.

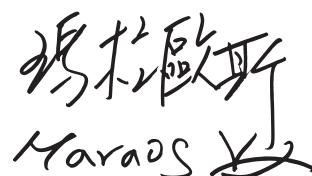
In this globalised society, it is inevitable to develop indigenous community tourism as more people want to get away from downtown life and enjoy the atmosphere and scenery completely different to the hustle and bustle in cities. This trend has brought about positive changes, such as increased economic growth or better understanding of indigenous cultures and features from outsiders on in-depth visits, to indigenous communities. However, there are always two sides of the same coin. The most evidently negative impact is an inclination to drive indigenous values towards capitalism and commercialisation, and away from the original primitive beliefs.

It is, therefore, of pivotal importance to avoid catering to the mainstream values when establishing a business pattern for positive and in-depth indigenous community's tourism. Instead, the principles and approaches used to establish the business pattern should be based on and help reflect each community's characteristics. This way, visitors will have to learn about and respect community's venues and rules of behaviours.

In this volume of Indigenous Sight, we invited a young Rukai person, Muni Druluan, to one indigenous community named Qalang Smangus and to know more about the nitty-gritty of the guesthouse hospitality industry. Doing so not only helps young home-returning indigenous people nurture a broad understanding of the development of community tourism, but also enables people to witness how Qalang Smangus has incorporated traditional indigenous elements into tourism, and enjoyed economic benefits derived from tourism. At the same time, Qalang Smangus has succeeded in making its community's knowledge accessible and understandable to outside visitors. This is a whole new approach to community tourism.

When we look to the future of community tourism, we hope that tourists can visit here and gain hands-on experience of indigenous life. As indigenous people, we will try and introduce our precious indigenous philosophy into tourism to enhance its depth and width.

Panirsirngen do yanbonkay  
Chairman of the Indigenous  
Peoples Cultural Foundation



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# 0 /

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Establishment of Business Pattern  
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# / 0

Indigenous Community Tourism  
So Tough, You Need to Wear  
More than One Hat

# 2 2

See the Atayal Culture  
from an Outside Perspective

06

City Girl Going into  
the Mountains

08

Smangus:  
A Community that Grew  
into One Large Family

14

So Much to Learn about  
Indigenous Community  
Tourism

18

Hail the Smangus  
Giant Trees

26

Peaches  
Need to be Pampered

30

Making Up for  
What I Missed As a Child

Passing the Boton >>

Passing  
the Baton

## Surprisingly Fun-Loving Atayal matyangulwalwadhane ka vai

Sitting in the deep mountains of Wutai, at the southernmost tip of the Central Mountain Range, Cekele Adiri, the Adiri Community, was relocated down the mountains to permanent housing after Typhoon Morakot. Traveling often between Taichung and Cekele Adiri, the urban indigenous kid Muni Druluan finds the road home thus much shorter.

However, images of spending time with the family did not follow the relocation, but remained there, deep in the mountains. Coming to Smangus Community, 1,500 meters above sea level, what childhood memories will Muni recall, surrounded by mountains and forests? How will Muni feel after her encounter with the Atayal people who have successfully developed indigenous community tourism by working in solidarity?

Note: "Patarwamara: matyaneulwalwadhane ka vai" means "Heritage: Very Charming Atayal" in Rukai language.





# City Girl Going into the Mountains

Muhi Druluan

Born and bred in the city, visits their indigenous community with her parents during holidays

Event coordinator for the Taiwan Indigenous Film Academy

Amazing storyteller, inspired by everything and able to elaborate on anything

Let's Explore!



Growing up, I noticed that I have been searching for Adiri in every indigenous community in the mountains. My mother came from Cekele Adiri, Adiri Community, the highest indigenous community of the Rukai people, and two hours' drive into the mountains from the low land. In my adolescent days when "nothing was ever good enough", I was so accustomed to life in the city that I always felt Adiri inconvenient and outdated. My uncles were always taking turns climbing onto the roof to fix the antenna due to bad receptions, the most glorified dish at mealtimes was a large pot of pigeon pea with spare rib soup, and the influx of family members meant that gas would run out without notice and that we had to wait for large pots of water boil before we can clean ourselves... We would complain to our mother that we miss the deep-fried chicken cutlet, and the cable TV that was always readily available, since the only recreation we had was strolling the paths in the community. This journey home which we took for granted became a distant memory after Typhoon Morakot hit in my sophomore year at university. The endless rainstorm hit Adiri hard, completely destroying the entire road in front of our old house, and our home was relocated to the permanent housing at the foot of the mountain.

With the relocation to permanent housing, we were able to reach our grandparents' house on my mother's side much faster after we exit the highway. However, 5 years after the relocation, my grandmother passed away. It was then that I came to realize how much I missed our old indigenous community in the mountains. All the memory I had regarding my grandmother entailed a backdrop of Adiri in the mountains: early morning, grandma and grandpa would leave to work in the fields together, slowly walking into the mountains; when grandma was feeding the boar piglets, we as children would surround her all curious and wanting to help, grandma would say that this is too difficult for us while unable to hide her smile; she would pass over cooked taro, the staple food and the favorite food of our people, and say to us "eat, or you get hungry" in the few Mandarin words she can manage.

What I look forward to most of all on this journey to Qalang Smangus is learning the farm work. My grandparents used to say that since we grew up in the city and were still so young, it would be dangerous for us to help out in the fields. But even after we gradually came of age, they would still say that we should wait until we were older. High up there in Smangus, perhaps I can learn the work and be able to secretly say to my grandma, "look, Daudu, I am now old enough to learn the farm work. The elders here may not be Rukai, but they are also kacalrisiane, they are very nice, and they love the Lord just like you."

Like Cekele Adiri, the main religion at Qalang Smangus is Christianity, when you visit the website of Smangus, you see quotes from the Bible as reminders and encouragements. With Adiri being hard to reach, the class-based society is maintained comparatively well. Grandma being the youngest daughter of the traditional leader from a neighboring indigenous community, had always cautioned her children about what we can or cannot do being we are with our status since she got married and moved to Adiri. We tend to think that once outside religion and culture come into the indigenous community, it will deeply impact the lives and ways of thinking of the people. But looking at the road as we drive into Smangus, I think perhaps that is just outside conjecture.

Indigenous peoples with profound traditional knowledge will no doubt open a road that is both traditional and modern, valuable albeit difficult. I look forward to seeing in person how Atayal elders at Smangus demonstrate to indigenous youth within and the outside world with profoundness their wisdom practices.



# Smangus:

## A Community that Grew into One Large Family

1,500 meters above sea level; first access to electricity in 1979; first road leading out built in 1995, these are numbers that describe Smangus, but nothing can compare to what the body actually feels after driving for 3 hours along the winding and bumpy roads, going up and down and constantly rocking in all directions before finally reaching the entrance of this indigenous community. This indigenous community, once isolated due to its geographical setting, later became a popular tourist site due to the giant trees discovered over three decades ago.

The influx of tourists and accommodations individually operated by households in the community led to undesired competition and bad blood. "If this goes on, it will ruin our children," people gradually realized, and finally, after a few meetings, the 8 households in the community decided to build accommodations and restaurants together. In 2004, the joint operation system (Tnunan, the Atayal language for "weaving together") began, with joint ownership of the lands and joint operation of the tourism industry. After years of adjustment, there are currently 9 departments including cultural education, agriculture, tourism development, ecology, and human resources. The goals are to develop tourism and invest the acquired resources back into education, culture, and medical care in the community, and establish for the next generation an indigenous community system embracing the concept of "sustainability". The entire community has three major bodies, each handling different affairs: the indigenous community assembly (internal affairs), the church (faith), and the indigenous community development association (portal for outside and public affairs).

Nowadays, the main topic for the community is no longer the rural flight of population, but how to sustainably manage culture and nature whilst developing tourism. In the past, ancestors roamed the mountains and found spacious lands for future generations; now, the Smangus of this generation, continue to sustainably protect the land and their people via joint operations in the community.

### Team Smangus

Tourism is the main industry at Smangus, everybody has to do something, and there is something for everybody to do here. Everyone does their own job, and each is indispensable.

#### Community leader

Masay  
Sulung



#### Giant Trees

Moto Masay



#### Housekeeping

Kyomi Icyeh

30+ years of  
experiences



#### Peach Harvest

Lahuy Icyeh





Restaurants

Pinas Icuung



Wasiq Wuhan



Ciwas Micyo



Raha Siba



Chairperson of the Indigenous Community Assembly

Mu Masay



Head of Agricultural Department



Head of Personnel Department

Pusing Yuraw



# Indigenous Community Tourism So Tough, You Need to Wear More than One Hat

The tourism business at Smangus is divided into accommodations and restaurants, wholly joint operated by the entire community, and accounts for 70% of community income. Let's follow Muni and learn all about the ins and outs of the tourism industry!



## Housekeeping

The accommodation group is in charge of housekeeping, which is from 9:30 to 14:00 every day, including replenishing amenities, changing sheets, and cleaning the bathroom and the floor. Groups of 4 (roughly 20 people, more during summer and winter holidays) against rooms that could house more than 200 people. When they finish their own area, they will move on to support other areas so that all housekeeping can be completed before tourists check in.

In the past, beds at Smangus were bunkbeds that could house up to 400 to 500 guests, but the immense excess of tourists not only adversely impacted the quality of accommodation, increased the amount of garbage, but also became a great burden to the staff. 8 years ago, they adjusted the room types, increased the number of suites and decreased the number of guests they can take in, and cut back on the use of disposable utensils. Be it the shift rotation or adjustments made to the room types; everything was jointly decided by the people in the community.



The definition of tidy is very ambiguous, it's so hard to remember where to put things, and running around, I feel like I'm playing the game of escaping the room.



Kyomi demonstrates how amenities are placed in the room for Muni to copy into other rooms. But the lack of faith in herself caused Muni to constantly travel back and forth between the rooms to check.

## Restaurants

The restaurant group is split into the back and front of houses for different restaurants, and they are in charge of the cooking, prepping, plating, and dishwashing in the back, and the seating, serving, and talking to customers in the front.





waffle

Three years ago, the chief of the Tourism Development Association at Smangus worked with the community and launched the afternoon set, offering pizza, waffles, and cake. In a separate kitchen, four people worked to make 60 pizzas, flattening and baking the dough, then adding different sauces and toppings to order. In addition to the common flavors such as seafood and vegetarian, there is also the boar meat pizza. Sauces come in tomato and pesto, among which, the “tana pesto” uses Ailanthus Prickly Ash to replace basil, creating a unique flavor you cannot get anywhere outside this area.



Tana seafood pizza



Vegetarian pizza



Atayal boar meat pizza



What's special about this place is that the housekeeping and restaurant jobs at Smangus are rotational, crews working the accommodation area today will work in the restaurants the next day. If you stay long enough in the community and really pay attention, you will see that the staff are all familiar faces who appear in different places. The goal of shift rotation is for people to get used to different kinds of work, with the different working hours required for various jobs, it also gives people an opportunity to take a break.

## Bedtime Story from the Community Leader

Originally, the ancestors of the Atayal lived in the mountains of Nantou, but with the expansion of the population, farming land became scarce, “if we continue to stay here, our children won't even have enough mountain pepper.” The ancestors thus began spreading north, climbing over the mountains just to find a bigger space for future generations to reside. Finally, the ancestors parted ways at Quri Sqabu (Siyuan Yakou, Datong Township in Yilan), and migrated separately towards New Taipei City, Hsinchu County, and Yilan. So unwilling to part ways, they hugged the tree so tight the barks came off. Ancestors of Traditional Leader Masay chose to settle at b’bu Sasaw, which became the current Smangus Indigenous Community.

Having fought against the colonial government, experienced the state oppression regarding traditional language and culture post-war, and living so deep in the mountains, life was harsh for the people of Smangus for quite a while. In 1991, with the “discovery” of the sacred trees in the community and the first road leading out built, the tourism business brought opportunities, and people who were working in the cities back to the community, but it also brought about competition. “We found the sacred trees together, and we built the road together. If all we saw were the money, each doing our own thing without love, the lands will eventually become just cash cow for the corporate world.” Luckily, wise was the traditional leader back then who practiced the ideal of shared lands, just as what the ancestors had wanted for them when they relocated, all so that the lives and culture of the Atayal can continue to spread.

Finally, the traditional leader asked Muni about her own community, and reminded her heavily heartedly, “we must bring back our cultures, and safeguard the dignity and lands of indigenous peoples.”



Wooden carvings of animals by the Community Leader



Formosan black bear

There used to be hundreds of black bears in the mountain, but people enjoyed their meat so much that they are facing extinction. The black bear carving is in commemoration as well as a reminder to the younger generation to not hunt them anymore.



Owl

When women become pregnant, owls around their houses will start calling. If it is a boy, the owl will make “buh-buh” sounds; if it is a girl, the owl will make “nia-nia” sounds; if it is a boy and a girl, they will make both sounds, they are even better than the ultrasound.



The babbler

The Taiwan grey-cheeked fulvetta is used by the Atayal for fortune-telling. When hunting, the hunters observe the bird's path of flight to determine the auspiciousness of this journey. If the flight is smooth, all is auspicious, if the flight is rushed and wavering, the journey could be filled with danger.

# So Much to Learn about Indigenous Community Tourism

Have you visited Smangus before?  
How did you imagine Smangus to be?



I have never visited Smangus before, but I have visited Cinsbu on the other side. I saw on Public Television Service the joint operation system applied here, and I found this solidarity fantastic. We have been considering the accommodation and tourism industry in our community in the last few years, and this system has been proposed as well.

Which do you prefer more,  
the front or back of house?



Back of house. Front of house requires talking to the customers, sometimes the customers are very direct in their responses, and I can get affected. Back of house allows me to focus completely on my work, the tempo may be fast, and the crews are very forthcoming, but it's nothing personal and all job-related, so I won't get affected as much or be as nervous.

What do you find most impressive after  
participating in the housekeeping and  
restaurant shifts throughout the day?



In the morning, I felt like there were so many rooms to clean that they would never end, but it feels very different compared to that tiresome feeling of working in the city. Here, everybody works together and that makes me feel happier. What I find most impressive is the shift rotation, it is quite amazing. This means that people place great trust in their teamwork and that everyone can complete their job in their position as well as help one another, showing incredible solidarity. I think this is some amazing management experience we can share with the western countries.

Another benefit is the vast number of stars in the sky. I recall how we used to say that the stars are like dandruff when we see so many of them and so close in our old community.





## How did it feel working in the restaurant today?



I used to work the front of house in a Japanese restaurant before, so it came very naturally to me, and I knew how to talk to the customers. In the back of house, I was in charge of plating the side dishes and rice, the most difficult part was even portioning with color coordination, luckily, I pulled through in the end.

Looking at the unique Atyal dishes, I recall that we've actually discussed offering unique Paiwan-Rukai dishes in our community as well. Living close in proximity with similar cooking methods and ingredients used, the Rukai and Paiwan people often work together to provide catering services. We can include Rukai abai and Paiwan cinavu. Taro is well-loved by our people, we can dry the taro, which is smaller than our fist, and just munch on it, and there is the pigeon pea with spare rib soup, we have the habit of growing pigeon pea and make them into nutritious dishes.



## You took part in the housekeeping work today, and you were all over the place with setting the amenities but very smooth at cleaning the bathroom, why was that?



It probably had something to do with our nature, the Rukai people love to mop and wipe down. I used to watch my mom clean all the time and didn't think twice about it, until one day, my non-Rukai friend said, "you Rukai people are always cleaning," that's when I realized we seemed to really love to clean. My mom said that in their community, they would clean even the outside road, and sometimes they would tell people to take their shoes off before crossing the road. But sorting things neat and tidy really isn't my thing, people would refold the clothes I've already folded and was genuinely surprised when I said that I've already folded them.

## What touched you when you were talking with the traditional leader tonight?



I think it was when the traditional leader shared words of encouragement with me towards the end. I used to do field research in indigenous communities, and I talk to elders all the time, they usually end the conversation with, "you are an indigenous child, it's up to your generation now." Maybe it's because of the small indigenous population in Taiwan, elders bear the same hope and love for the younger generation regardless of which group we belong to, and it always touches my heart when I hear this.

There is always the issue of age, most of the time, we feel that just because we are younger, we don't get a say, and can only focus on our duty. Even if we provide our suggestions very subtly, elders still disapprove. You are only allowed opinions towards decision-making if you work extra hard and do much more than required. This happens a lot to indigenous youth in urban areas, so I envy the Smangus, they are all about equality here, people who make decisions are young, and the elders trust them, which in turn appeals to more of the younger generation to return and serve the community.







# Hail the Smangus Giant Trees

Smangus is famous for its giant trees, but how were they discovered? What does the scenery along the way have to do with the migration history and economy of the Atayal people? Walking on the traditional territory of the community, let's take a look at everything that makes Smangus!

\*"Sacred trees" is the term used by outsiders; local indigenous people call them "giant trees".



## Looking Out on the Atayal Traditional Territory

Looking out from the sloped gravel path, this entire area is the traditional territory of the indigenous community, and this land is guarded by the local Atayal people. The Rgyax Sangan mountain up ahead is roughly 1,500 meters, some of the gentle slopes used to be inhabited by the Atayal people, and this is where our ancestors fought the Japanese army.

We used to hunt along this trail and grow shiitake, but we didn't know about the existence of the "giant trees", or rather, we've seen them but never paid attention, since the concept of "giant trees" didn't exist.

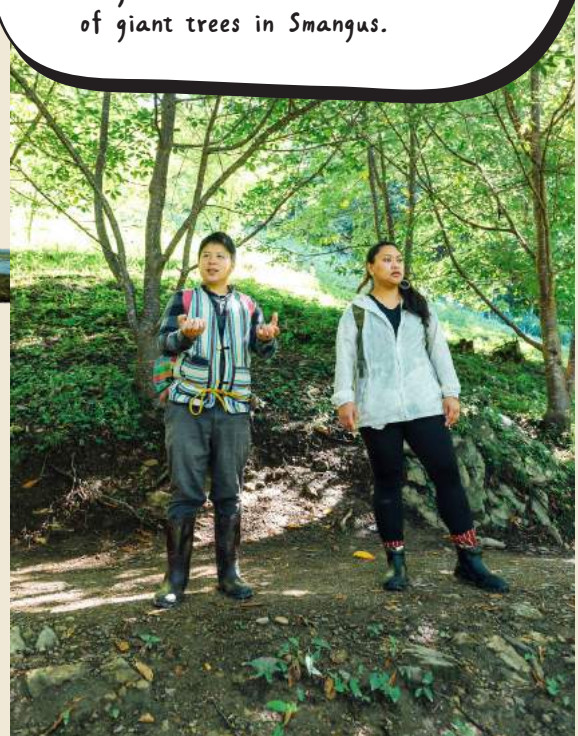
Following the Tqzing Creek below, the river source can be traced back to the Dabajian Mountain, and along the creek to Smangus was the migration route of the Atayal, where they first settled before slowly spreading further downwards. This is why people from the front range (Jianshi and Naluo) might say, "I'm from Smangus." Tqzing is also the upstream of Dahan River, hence, protecting the ecology in our community means protecting the Shimen Reservoir.

Later in the early 1990s, our people saw the so-called "sacred trees" on Lala Mountain, then God told them in their dreams to look for giant trees, which was how they "discovered" the existence of giant trees in Smangus.



## A Gentle Slope with Little Weed

Usually, if you see gentle slopes that are especially "clean" with little weed along the trail, it means people are out here often. When our people go down into the valley or travel to the mountain on the opposite side, they first gather to pray and prep their equipment and supply, hence the patches with less weed.





## Japanese Cedar Woods for Future Generations

This plot was originally barren with few trees, so our people planted Japanese cedar here because it can be used as maintenance material for the trail.

Another large patch of Japanese cedar is lower down the Smangus Community. In the early days, every household grew peaches, but after discussion and resolution by the community, it was decided that the peaches should be grown on gentle slopes and places less likely to be affected by typhoons, so they decided to plant Japanese cedar there instead, which can also be used for future generations to build houses.

Plans such as planting maple trees instead of orchards and forming scenic trail are well-thought-out with long-term goals. Elders often caution us not to rely too much on peaches, because the climate will change in the future, and we must allocate the risks.




## Tayux Raga, Pagodas Along the Trail

Tayux means “to rest”, and Raga means “maple tree”. This area was developed by the five assiduous brothers of Talah, Temu, Ahok, Miquy, and Yukan, and they each had respective expertise in agriculture, sports, music, and weaving. The people at Smangus Community are the offspring of Miquy.



## Predecessor of Peaches: Workshed for Mushrooms

Prior to peaches becoming the economic crop, the main economic crop at Smangus shiitake. Shiitake needs to be dried with heat after gathering, and there are two ways: one is to use the drying equipment sitting right in the workshed, or dry naturally by digging a ditch, placing a metal drum in the ditch, and piling timber inside the drum to dry shiitake in high temperature. The machines are all removed and all that is left now is the empty shed.



I remember coming here with my mom and dad, carrying the shiitake spawn here from Smagus Community. We used to eat boar meat here, they say you'll grow up if you finish them.

## Repairing the Trail for the Giant Trees

During the shutdown due to COVID-19 in 2021, men in the community spent millions on timber and hulled them into the area of giant trees using trucks and manpower. With the trail built, it can protect the roots of the giant trees, and prevent tourists from trampling all over them.



## The Creek with a Scent

Part of the giant trees trail coincides with our hunting trail, and in the past, our people would chill the game they caught in the naturally cold creek; therefore, the creek carries the scent of the games.

## Giant tree YAYA

YAYA means “giant”, and this sacred tree is about 2,500 years old, measuring 45 meters tall. It grew so tall because it sits on the leeward slope close to the water source, a perfect environment for trees to grow tall and large.



# See the Atayal Culture from an Outside Perspective

Does it remind you of being in your old community when you hiked the giant trees trail today?



It sure did. When I was going up the slope, my body kind of remembered it. We used to have to go up and down the slopes in our community, and it felt very similar. Especially the beginning part of the trail today, it's very similar to that in my community, just with a less densely grown bamboo forest. We didn't have toys to play with growing up, so we would walk about and snap twigs and grass, pick up pebbles and throw them about, just messing around. This reminds me of something. The houses in our community are built one story after another along the slopes, so when you are walking on the upper story, you are led to the roof of the house in the lower story. Once, we saw a house that seemed less attended to. We thought it was vacant and could be our secret hideaway, so we called on everyone to come and play in it, jumping around on the roof. Later when we went home, we were scolded. People in that house came and asked who the kids were jumping around on someone else's roof.

Did anything interesting occur along the trail today?



I think it's walking in the mountains and not seeing people in front of or behind you, you become very conscious that the sounds you make are mixed with those coming from the mountains, but you have your own sound. When I was walking alone, I heard loud footsteps, but when I looked back, I didn't see anyone. I once thought the sounds might be coming from me, yet the footsteps sounded really loud and boy-like, I didn't think it could be me. In order to trace the source of the sound, I stopped dead in my tracks for 30 seconds, but still saw no one at all. I calmed down and observed my own pace, then I realized that the sounds did come from me, and it was then that I felt like I was walking and breathing with the environment and that I became one with the environment.


You noticed some insignificant landscape along the trail, did that observation come from your experiences in your community?



That's not from my childhood, but from attending the guided tours in other communities growing up. For example, when I saw a cleared patch today, I knew that when you see a cleared patch in the mountains, it's very likely because people are using the land, and that was something I've heard before from the elders.




Anything you would like to share with us from your talk with Moto?



There was a sunshower after we came out of the trail, and Moto immediately got on his bike to go home and bring the washings in. I was rather shocked and thought, "oh, so it's his job to bring the washings in." Household labor didn't match the title of the Board Director. When I was at the traditional leader's house to chat with him last night, I also saw him bathe his children. This ties in with the discussions on the gender concepts of indigenous people in recent years, it is very difficult to generalize the patrilineality or matrilineality of any group of people with today's gendered division of labor. For example, the Rukai is a class-based society, and marrying the eldest daughter of a noble family requires the male to "marry into" the family. But the term "marry into" is a very Mandarin concept and not at all what it really entails and does not affect the division of household labor between men and women.


I talked about interracial marriage with Moto today, and since the Atayal male cannot marry into the female's family, what should they do if an Atayal male and the eldest daughter of a Rukai noble family were to get married? Guess the two families will have to settle it over a row. I have yet to encounter an actual example, so I guess my fate has been carefully avoiding this route for me.

What touched you the most today?



I really enjoy walking, so it felt good walking amongst the sacred trees. We had tiny paths in our community, so I used to get bored hiking. I guess people here probably don't find the trail special either, just as I didn't use to find it special living in the stone slab house growing up, but when tourists began taking photographs, I realized that a lot of the traditional customs we have naturally grown so used to are in fact valuable and of cultural significance.

Moto mentioned building an environment for children to learn their language, can you share with us your journey of learning your mother language?



I grew up in the city, so I can only say simple things like "do you want to eat", "I'm hungry", "take a shower", or "go to bed", much like the basic English phrases we learn in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, so I cannot converse with my grandma in our language. I agree with Moto, you need to learn the indigenous language from a young age, it is very difficult learning another language once you're all grown up. For example, sometimes when my mother uses some words in our language, I will note them down on my phone, but every time I read them again, they are like new words, and I have to memorize them all over again. Always working on the first few words meant I'll never be able to remember all of them.

I think what Moto said should be shared with my mom because my mom would speak lengthily in our language and expect you to respond, but I really couldn't understand her in such long sentences, so I had to start breaking down the sentences and confirm with her word by word. So, if we can build up the kids' vocabulary from a young age, they will be able to learn their language much faster.







# Peaches Need to be Pampered

The two main selling points at Smangus are the 'giant trees' and 'peaches'. Peaches are a highly sought-after fruit that is harvested only once a year, and many tourists flock to the mountains year after year in seek of peaches. In addition to the naturally well-resourced environment, much behind-the-scenes hard work goes into the big juicy sweet peaches.

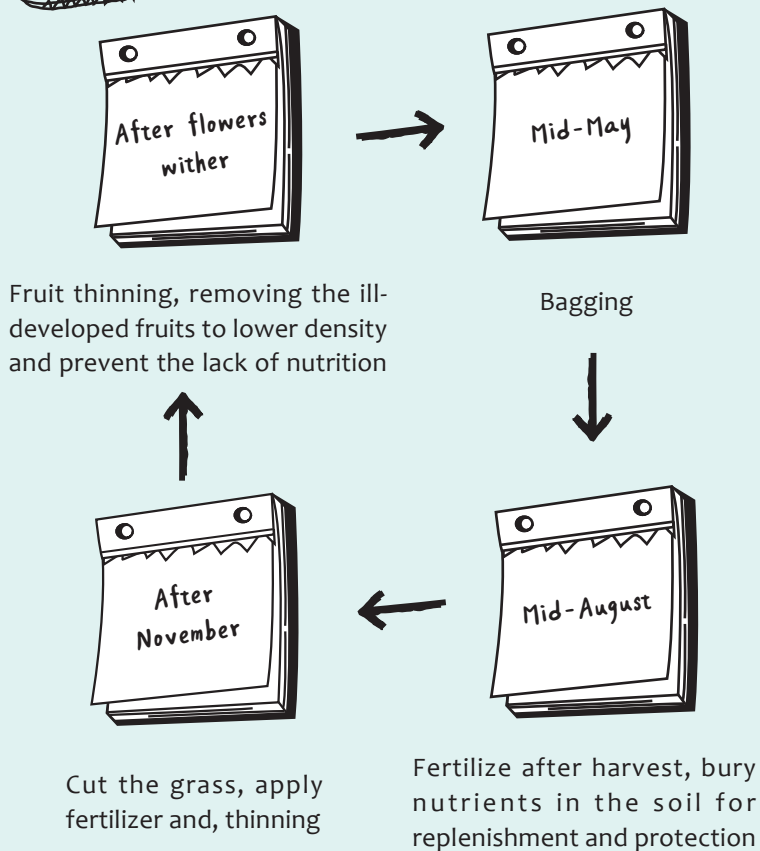
## Planting Peaches

- Peach varieties at Smangus: early and late Golden Peach.
- Harvests only once a year, require great attention and are extremely wary of typhoons.
- Almost every household grew peaches before the tourism industry was developed in Smangus. Since the tourism industry became the main income, the planted area has downsized to 4 orchards with roughly 700 peach trees, requiring 70,000 bags each year.



- Pipe structure: If the twigs drop down, the peaches will not grow well, in turn affecting the sweetness, so all orchards have crisscrossing pipe structures to support the twigs.
- When the peaches are too sweet, they will crack, so cracked fruits tend to be sweeter. Fruits eaten by squirrels and nocturnal moths are also very sweet.

### Managing Peaches



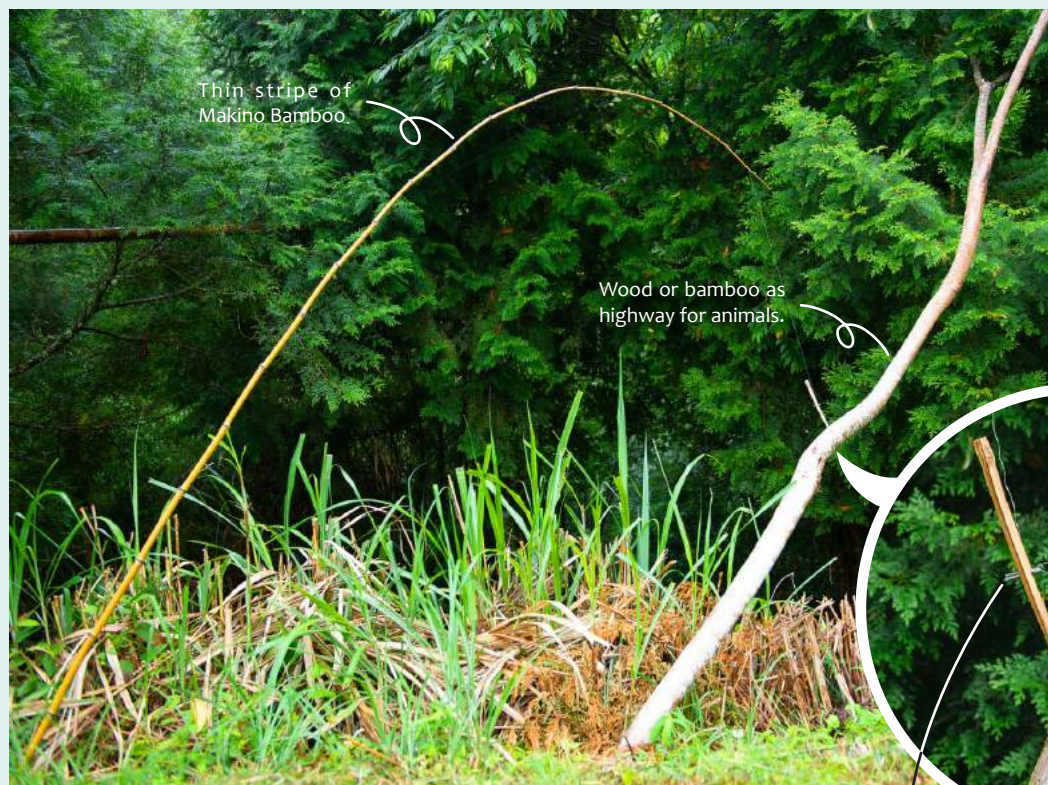
- A healthy peach tree can yield about 400 to 500 peaches per tree per season, and an older fruit tree about 100.
- 15 to 20 years old peach trees are preferred. The trees in the area we visited are all above 15 years old, and they will be chopped down at the end of this season to give the land a rest, and we will plant new peach trees on other plots.

Weed 3-5 times a year: before flowers wither and fruit thinning in April, before bagging in May, before harvest in June, before applying fertilizer in October or November (or once a month if time permits)

## Set Trngan (trap) to Catch Squirrels

- Timing: Traps are set after bagging the peaches mid-May, two inspection rounds are made each day during the early morning and evening.
- Captured animals: Formosan Striped Squirrel, Red-bellied Tree Squirrel, rat.

When setting the trap, the springing stripe must be tucked under the arms, just in case a loosened grip will release the trap and hit the eyes.



### Noose Trap

Thin steel wire, used to be ramie thread or thin vines in the past. The hooped trap is 5-8 cm in diameter, roughly the size of a rat's head. The hooped trap must be at a distance from the runway, roughly the height of the animal's head when traveling at speed.



### Connector

Making pri (the connector) with iron wire.

### Connector Bar

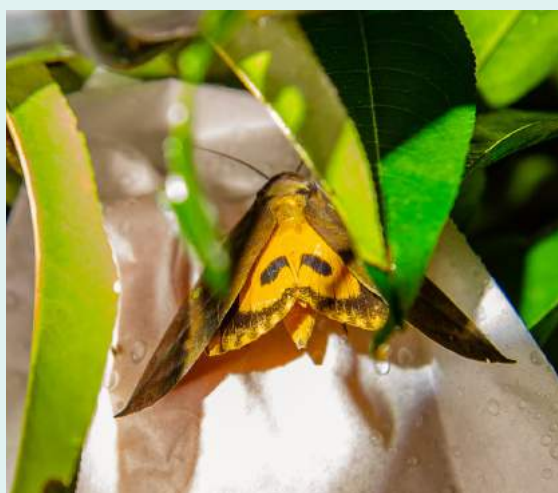
Sharpened wood stick (tenon) inserted in the crevice of the runway.

The number of animals caught each year is different, if the fruits in the mountains grow very well, squirrels tend not to come down to eat the peaches. There is not a fixed number of traps set, the traps are usually set among trees (squirrels also travel on the ground, but they prefer traveling via twigs and branches).

## Must Catch Nocturnal Moths Every Night

During the peach harvest season, we must report to the orchard every night from 9 to 11 o'clock (when the nocturnal moth is most active). Peaches that have been eaten by the nocturnal moth will rot and cannot be sold, so we must prevent the nocturnal moth invasion. With all 4 orchards together at Smangus, we can catch an average of 20 plus nocturnal moths per night, so if we're not careful, it could be hundreds of peaches at stake.

- Types of nocturnal moths: Tropical Fruit-Piercing Moth, Cotton Leafworm, small nocturnal moths.



Peaches bitten by the nocturnal moth will remain on the tree, we welcome other animals to continue eating that same fruit and leave the others alone.



#### ● Prevention:

1. Fly paper can capture small nocturnal moths.
2. Place hormones, the love trap, inside PET bottles to capture small nocturnal moths.
3. Capture by hand: when the nocturnal moth stops on a peach, quickly catch it by the wings to separate it from the peach forever.

We usually skip breakfast during peach harvest season so we have the capacity to eat the peaches that cannot be sold.

## Peach Harvest Time !

### Harvest

Peach harvest during July and August each year is the busy farming season at Smangus. First, remove the bag, hold the peach as if holding an egg, and gently turn the peach while carefully keeping the stem intact. If the stem comes off, bugs can easily get inside the fruit through the opening and shorten its shelf life. Put the peach back into the bag before putting it into the basket, just to prevent scratches on the peach.



### Sorting & Packaging



Remove the bag → Sort and box according to weight → wrap the peach with a protective sleeve, make sure it is tight and stable → check the bottom again for blemishes, and stack the boxes accordingly → Dispatch

( Sort through the blemished peaches and sell retail to tourists visiting the community )

# Making Up for What I Missed As a Child

How did you feel about working in the peach orchard today?



This is probably the first and only time in my life to set a trap. Rukai women don't really take part in hunting, plus the fact that we grew up in the city and being kids, elders felt it extremely dangerous to take us to the fields in the mountains. Traps are handcrafts, and I am really bad at weaving. The only Rukai embroidery I am capable of is the most basic cross-stitch, so when Jumu was saying "L-shaped", I was wondering to myself the whole time, "where is that L-shape?"

But I have no problem catching nocturnal moths, I'm not afraid of animals. When I heard Lahuy say that some elders make their rounds from 8 pm to 12 am, I was, on the one hand, filled with respect for how hardworking the farmers are, and on the other, felt how it really reflects the different characters between our two generations. As for the harvest, I am deeply impressed with how quickly Lahuy can identify which peaches have gone bad and which ones have not, he hardly needed to remove the bags to see, but I spent a lot of time peeking into the bags. Finally, at the packing station, I was really worried about falling behind schedule. Everyone was so experienced, but I kept on ripping the protection sleeves, once even ripped about 4 or 5 in a row, and only getting the hang of it after a few dozens of peaches. After today, I understood that peach farming required great attention. I had thought it was pure labor, but there are actually a lot of details to attend to.

What struck you the most having spent the last three days at Smangus?



With the joint-ownership and sharing system at Smangus, everybody works very hard. Unlike us who work for paychecks in the city, sometimes we slack off, but people here work with a sense of mission, and together as one, they make sure everything is done well. Also, with the rotating shifts, people get to try everything and need to know how everything is done. From the reception desk to farming, from the front and back of houses to housekeeping, the learning is extensive and that is why many can work independently at a young age. I believe that this pattern contributes greatly to the training and empowering of people and the future generation.

Coming to the end of this journey, is there anything you would like to share with other urban indigenous youths?



During the process, I grew envious of the young people at Smangus for being able to grow up in a familiar environment. As an urban indigenous person, it was natural to feel out of place when first returning to the indigenous community, just as one would joining a new group. But it's more important to move past the awkwardness and learn to get things done well. Put your head down and don't assume too much, more people will get to know you this way and you can find your place in the group quicker!

Waving goodbye with peaches in our hands gifted by the Smangus people, we drove down the mountains. Looking out the window, I recall similar scenes leaving my own community in the past, the car filled with vegetables and meat grown and bred by the elders, and grandpa and grandma standing outside our home. We would roll down our windows and cry out goodbye to them. I would look through the rear windshield at the grass, the trees, and the sky of our community quickly fading away, and grandpa and grandma becoming smaller and smaller, further and further away. "Our people will ultimately return to the community, our younger ones will eventually come back, so we cannot lose our land." I recall what traditional leader Masay said to me one night.

Originally, according to regulations, our people had to forfeit their rights to the lands of our indigenous community in the mountains before relocating to permanent housing. Therefore, even though the road leading out of Cekele Adiri is dangerously unstable, not many are willing to relocate. How can we just leave the lands our ancestors resided in for hundreds of years due to some external reasons? No one could bear to, therefore, after much protest and insistence, they were able to keep their lands. Every time we return to the mountains for tomb sweeping, mom and a few other elders would walk around a little more to take the view in, reluctant to leave. Our lands may be tattered nowadays, but it is still as beautiful and important to my family.

I visited Smangus at the end of July, tourists flocked there to escape the heat of the summer, and people in the community explained that being short-staffed, they do not get time off during the summer holidays. They said it so casually that I find it hard to comprehend, how can they go on for two months with no break? For someone who has always worked in the city, I feel suffocated just hearing about it.

I spent three days living the life of local Smangus, working at different stations each day, housekeeping, the restaurant and kitchen, harvesting peaches, packing and boxing the fruit... I see them exhausted yet still working in sync, cheering each other on and keeping one another company through the chattering, even though they are sweating and covered in dust, their eyes are still glowing. They are not afraid of laboring away, because each time they give, they are giving for their own people, their own community, and their own future generations.

Recalling my days in my own community, I feel like there is nothing I can give in return for the nurturing of my elders and homeland. But I guess they never expected us to give back, they just wanted us to remember and always be humble and grateful for everything nature has given us and cherish it with all our hearts.

As we drove further and further away, I recalled what traditional leader Masay said to me as we parted ways, "Muni, you are an indigenous child, so it's up to your generation now." The sound of him playing the mouth harp hums in my mind.



2022.07.27





Passing the Baton >>

