

Transnational Land Deals in Mindanao: Situating Ambivalent Farmer Responses in Local Politics



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Context of the Deal

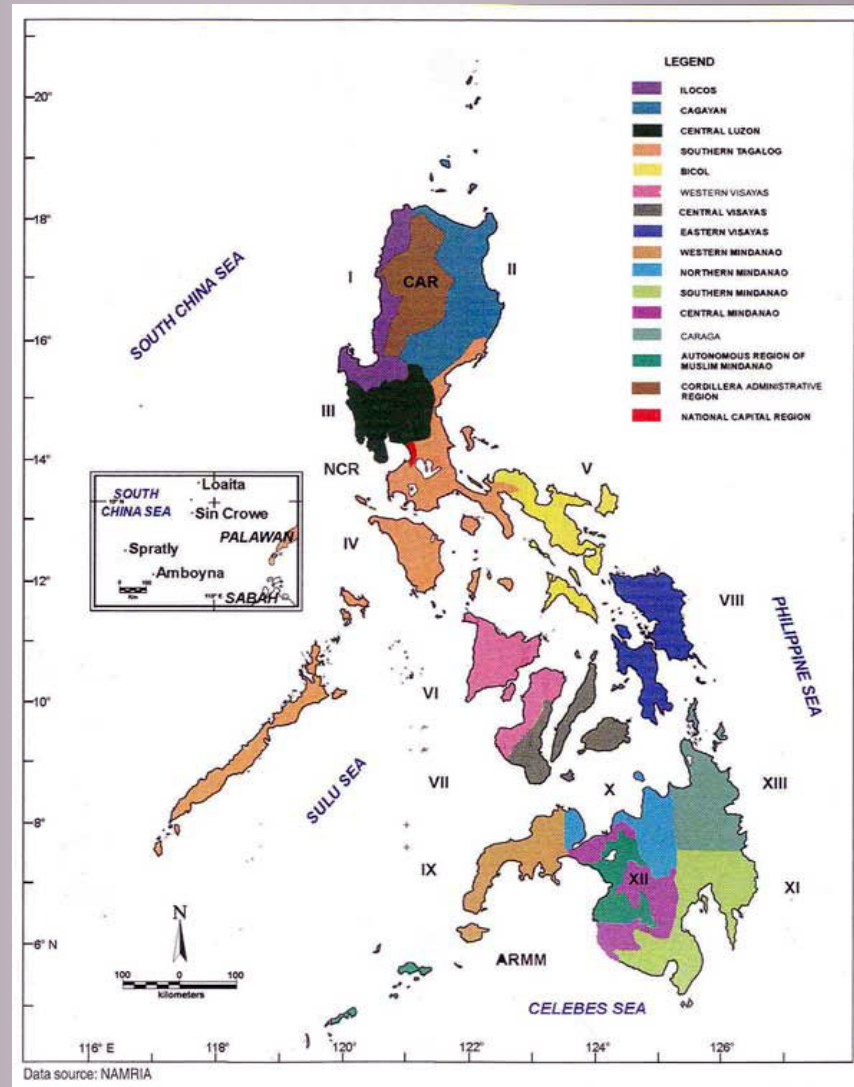
- Joint-land deal involving Aztropex (Philippines) & FEAICO (KSA)
- Laws against foreign ownership of land
- Around Mindanao & ARMM with various schemes
- High rates of poverty in areas and history of neglect
- Land deals looked at as poverty alleviation and development plan
- Strong farmer organizations

Approach

Three key elements:

- Tools of implementation
 - policies, politics and discourses
- Land relations surrounding the deals
 - Various arrangements around Mindanao but heavily in ARMM
- Local perspectives and responses
 - Ambivalent responses from farming communities and farmers, yet a shared concern of farming sector

Regions of the Philippines



Source: www.mindanaomaps.com

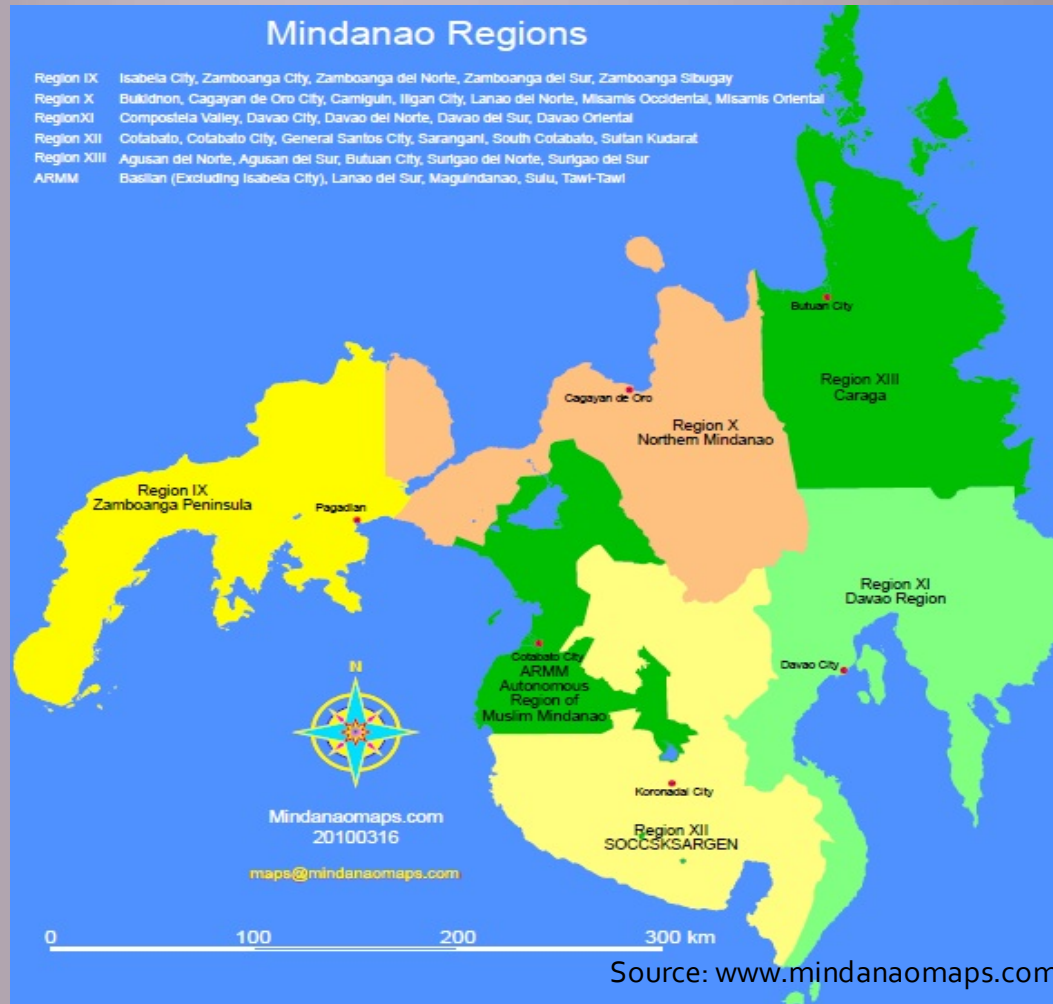
Findings: Defining the deal

- Mindanao target area due “ample resources and land” and “need for development”
- Long history of conflict over land around Mindanao, especially in ARMM
- History of conflict have left the area “untapped”
- Status of deal: contracts signed & plans developing
- Plantations of pineapple, banana, and rice, corn, and grains in different areas around Mindanao
- The land currently used for agriculture and for forest products

Targeted areas I



Targeted areas II



The areas that Aztropex was able to acquire were mostly in region 10, the ARMM and region 12.

Findings: Land Arrangements

- Land in the ARMM is held by Moro Clans
- Land organized by elite of each clan
- Average of 5 to 10 hectares per family and held through customary tenure. Per plan around 300 hectares.
- Land is a MILF camp.
- Claims that the land deal will turn the area from a “conflict zone into an ecozone”

Findings: Community Responses

- Different approaches to the deals between groups.
- Also differences within groups. Based on power, gender, age etc.
- Various forms of contestations taking place and will continue to take place
- However, concern about the fragmentation of groups, coops, and networks

Concluding Remarks

- Complexity of land deal rooted in local political structures, power dynamics and social contexts
- The processes to follow the implementation of each arrangement are rooted in the islands complex history defined by years of conflict over access to land
- Whether, how, and to what extent this conflict over access to land will be intensified is to be decided by the local politics and power dynamics of the involved actors
- Ambivalent responses represent current uncertainties and possible tensions within networks, between communities, and within communities