



ICRI GM Mexico/US (2)2008/MR/ Philippines
 INTERNATIONAL CORAL REEF INITIATIVE (ICRI)
 General Meeting
 Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 12-13th July 2008

**2008 Member's report on activities to ICRI
 Presented by The Philippines**

1. General Information

| | |
|---|---|
| Representation to ICRI (Country/Organization) | Philippines/Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR) |
| Focal Point 1: | Ms. Teresita S. Castillo Undersecretary for Special Concerns; OIC, Human Resource Development Service (in concurrent capacity); and Project Manager, Trees for Life Project (in concurrent capacity), DENR |
| Focal Point 2: | Mr. Antonio C. Manila Assistant Director, Protected Area and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), DENR |
| Last Meeting Attended: | 2007 |
| How do you circulate ICRI information within your country and/or organization? | Through emails/DENR website; meetings |
| Budget allocated for coral reef related activities (please mention for year/period) | |

For countries only:

| National Action Plan/Initiative | |
|--|---|
| Do you have a National Coral Reef Action Plan | Yes, it was formulated during the ICRI Regional Workshop for East Asia, held in Cebu, Philippines, April 2-4, 2001. |
| Is this plan publicly available? If so, please provide location. | No, copies of the National Action Plan were circulated only to relevant agencies for implementation. |
| Do you have a National Coral reef Initiative or Task Force? | No. The proposed Task Force was not acted/pursued, after the Philippine hosting of the ICRI Secretariat due to changes in management. However, there is an existing network on coral reefs, the PhilReefs coordinated by the Philippine Council for Aquatic and Marine Research and Development (PCAMRD) and Marine Sanctuary Network, coordinated by the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI) composed of government agencies working on coral reefs and related ecosystems, including management of marine |

| | |
|--|--|
| | sanctuaries and marine protected areas. |
| Are you engaged in any regional programs/initiatives, relating to coral reefs: | YES |
| If yes, please indicate which programmes/initiatives: | UNEP/GEF Regional Programme on Reversing Environmental Degradation of the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (UNEP-SCS); Tri-National Programme on the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion; Coral Reef Triangle Initiative; Partnership for Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia: Implementation of the Sustainable Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA). |
| Marine Protected Areas | To date there are 331 existing marine Protected Areas, covering MPAs established by the local government units and by the national government by virtue of the National Protected Areas System Act. |
| How many MPA(s) with coral reefs? | All of the 331 have coral reefs. |
| What is the percentage of coral reef MPA(s) to the (coastal zone/marine area)? | The estimated percentage of coral reef MPAs to the coastal zone is about 8-10%. There is currently an on-going validation of the status of marine sanctuaries/MPAs |
| Please provide the appropriate contact name for MPA data holdings | The MPA holding is included in the Coastal and Marine data base holding of the Coastal and Marine Management Office (CMMO), Department of Environment and Natural Resources |
| Details for contact (email/fax/telephone) | Executive Director, Coastal and marine Management Office, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Tel/fax: 632-9261004, Email: cmmo26@yahoo.com ; cmmo@denr.gov.ph |

2. Member contribution to the ICRI GM: Your response to the following questions will contribute to the ongoing ICRI activities. Due to heavy schedules of ICRI members, we have tried to keep the questions to a minimum and value any response you can provide.

Economic Valuation of coral reef ecosystems:

- a. Do you have examples of where economic valuation of coral reefs is being applied in practice? (e.g. in consideration of coastal land use, coastal/marine spatial planning, for determining compensation);

Yes, we do have examples where economic valuation of coral reefs is being applied and this is in the area of estimating compensation for damages to coral reefs in marine protected areas due to ship grounding or oil spill.

- b. Do you have established methods for assessing this value? Is so, please provide further information.

The methods applied in assessing these values are based on the result of studies conducted under the UNEP/GEF Regional Programme on Reversing Environmental Degradation of the South China Sea, and the initial studies undertaken under PEMSEA. Reports on resource valuation are available in the following website: www.unepscs.org and www.pemsea.org, respectively.

Sustainable Tourism:

- a. With respect to coral reefs, what does sustainable tourism mean to you?

Sustainable tourism with respect to coral reefs would mean implementation of a marine protected area/marine sanctuary management plan that will provide proper zoning of the area, and providing guidelines for minimal impact on the living corals, i.e. implementing greenfin or blueflag guidelines.

- b. What are the key challenges you face in achieving sustainable tourism?

The key challenges in achieving sustainable tourism are:

- i. Preparation of a management plan with multi-sectoral and community participation and its effective implementation.
- ii. Effective enforcement of laws and regulations
- iii. Sustainable financing

Integrated Management Framework Implemented:

- a) Executive Order no. 533, Adopting Integrated Coastal Management as National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of the Coastal and Marine was issued on June 6, 2006.
- b) The Integrated Coastal Management Program has been incorporated in the revised Philippine Medium Term Development Plan, specifically calling for the preparation of ICM plan by all municipalities and cities, establishment of marine sanctuaries.
- c) A Commission on Marine Ocean Affairs has been established under the Office of the President, to coordinate all efforts related to marine and ocean concerns, particularly with respect to the implementation of provisions of UNCLOS.

Capacity Building Programs Pursued:

On-going

- a) Implementation of an ADB/GEF assisted “Integrated Coastal Resource Management” covering 68 municipalities.
- b) Draft National Integrated Coastal Management Program has been prepared, as per Executive Order 533.
- c) Development and Implementation of a National Sustainable Development Strategy in line with the PEMSEA’s Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia, focusing on the operationalization of the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy, and Scaling-up of

ICM and formulation of a Rive basin and Coastal Area Management Framework,
Promotion of Public-Private Sector Participation.

A. Summary of IYOR 2008 Activities:

(To follow, have not received report from Reefcheck Philippines – Dr, Perry Alino from UPMSI will also be attending the ICRI Meeting, so have requested him to provide inputs on the matter.)

B. Emerging Issues

- Impact of climate change to coral reefs is a major issue that needs to be addressed. There should be support to undertake studies in the vulnerability assessment of coral reefs; formulation of general guidelines and pilot demonstration projects of appropriate adaptation measures.

C. ICRI and Other Meetings

D. Additional Information

The Philippines, known to have the third longest coastline in the world, adopts an *integrated coastal resource management* approach to address various coastal and marine-related concerns. ICRM or CRM is defined as the process of planning, implementing and monitoring beneficial and sustainable uses of coastal resources through participation, collective action and sound decision-making.

Until the 80's, coastal resource development is promoted by the national government while fishers exploited coastal resources in open access regime. Then on, coastal resources management in the Philippines has been developed to promote co-management of resources where management is devolved to the local government as a basic service.

With the current set-up, the national government is mandated to ensure that the local government espouses a planning and implementation process that is supported by various national policies and legal framework. Following are the relevant national policies that supports this shift in paradigm:

1. **RA No. 7586** or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 aims to protect and maintain the biological diversities and secure for the perpetual existence of all native animals and plants through the establishment of integrated protected areas. Protected Areas placed under the NIPAS include both marine and terrestrial protected areas.
2. **RA No. 9147** or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001 sets four objectives: (1) to protect and conserve wildlife species and their habitat; (2) to regulate the collection and trade of wildlife; (3) to pursue with due regard to the national interest, the country's commitments to international conventions, protection of wildlife and their habitats; and (4) to initiate or support scientific studies or conservation of biodiversity.
3. **RA No. 8550** (Fisheries Code) 1998 calls for the management and conservation of fishery and aquatic resources to maintain sound ecological balance.

4. ***Executive Order No.578*** was issued by the President in 2006 establishing the national policy on biological diversity, prescribing its implementation throughout the country particularly in the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecosystem (SSME) and the Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor. This policy, likewise provides for the review and update of the ECP; creation and organization of a Task Force on Verde Island Passage (VIP) to ensure sustainable use of its resources; and identification of other marine biodiversity corridors within the SSME that require urgent attention and formulation of appropriate conservation and management strategies.
5. ***Presidential Proclamation No. 1028*** was issued in June 1997 declaring the entire Sulu and Celebes Seas as an integrated conservation and development zone. The primary purpose of the proclamation is to conserve the rich biodiversity of the Sulu and Celebes seas while implementing sustainable development activities particularly in the fisheries and tourism sectors, thus ensuring the economic well being of coastal communities surrounding the Sulu and Celebes Seas.
6. ***Executive Order No. 533*** was issued by the President in 2006 adopting the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) as a national strategy to ensure the sustainable development of the country's coastal and marine environment and resources and establishing supporting mechanisms for its implementation. The Order likewise provides that ICM and related approaches, such as coastal resource management or coastal zone management, shall be the national management policy framework to promote sustainable development of the country's coastal and marine environment and resources in order to achieve food security, sustainable livelihood, poverty alleviation and reduction of vulnerability to natural hazards, while preserving ecological integrity.

The Integrated Coastal Management Program has been incorporated in the revised Philippine Medium Term Development Plan, specifically calling for the preparation of ICM plan by all municipalities and cities, establishment of marine sanctuaries.

7. A ***Commission on Marine Ocean Affairs*** (EO 612, March 27, 2007) has been established under the Office of the President, to coordinate all efforts related to marine and ocean concerns, particularly with respect to the implementation of provisions of UNCLOS.

Having about 70 per cent of the population living along the coasts, the country is constantly beset with issues. Favourably, the national government is supported by various foreign or local-assisted programs and projects that likewise promote co-management of resources. Following are some of the programs and projects implemented since the late 1990's to date by the Philippine Government:

1. ***Eco-Governance Project (Phase 2)***. EcoGov2 in collaboration with the DENR, various leagues of Local Government Units, DENR-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and the Department of Interior and Local Government is strengthening LGUs to respond to various challenges through localized but strategic actions that aim to: a) Reduce overfishing and the use of destructive fishing practices; b) Reduce illegal logging and conversion of natural forests; and c) Improve the management of solid wastes and wastewater. EcoGov is implemented by the DENR with support from the USAID.

2. ***Fisheries Improved for Sustained Harvest (FISH Project)***. The FISH Project aims to address a variety of fisheries management issues in four ecologically and economically significant marine ecosystems in the Philippines. Among these issues, and a greater emphasis will be focused on those relating to overfishing, illegal fishing, and habitat destruction combined with increased demand for fish and high population growth, which continue to drive fisheries productivity into deeper decline.

The FISH Project is a 7-year technical assistance project consisting of a 5-year period that commenced in September 22, 2003 and will end September 21, 2008. The Project has a 2-year option for extension until September 21, 2010.

3. ***Integrated Coastal Resource Management Project or the ICRMP***. The ICRMP is currently implemented for sustainable management of the country's coastal resources and to increase the income of the coastal communities. The project is being implemented in 68 municipalities in six provinces, four of which are within the SSME. It has four components namely: (a) Policy and Institutional Strengthening and Development; (b) ICRM and Biodiversity Conservation; (c) Enterprise Development and Income Diversification; and (d) Social and Environmental Services and Facilities.
4. ***Sustained Coastal Tourism Project in Asia (SCOTIA)***. The over-riding objective of the Project is the protection of the coastal and marine ecology in the project sites to promote tourism and increase the capability of the local community and tourism industry to manage these resources. The SCOTIA project aims to build local capability to increase sustainability, reduce the negative "ecological footprint" of the local community and the tourism industry, and increase the positive and sustainable aspects of coastal tourism through an alliance of conservation advocates and local and international tourism operators. The Project assist hotels, resorts and dive shop operators to commit to specific activities and improvements to reduce their environmental impacts and to increase efficiency; support Local Government Units, communities and other local stakeholders to increase recycling and composting in their areas and identify and implement affordable waste treatment and disposal systems; and, assist hotels, resorts, dive shop operators, LGUs, communities, and other stakeholders to develop and implement "user fees" to help fund conservation and management of coastal and marine resources, including improvement of capacity of local communities to enforce and effectively manage their marine protected areas (MPAs). Six areas are under the SCOTIA, namely, Balayan Bay in Batangas, Puerto Galera in Mindoro, El Nido in Northern Palawan, Moalboal and Mactan in Cebu, and Panglao in Bohol.
5. ***Southern Mindanao Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (SMICZM)***. The SMICZM is supported by the [Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund](#) and implemented by the DENR in Southern Philippines (Region XI). It aims to enhance the strategic integration of the management of the coastal and watershed ecosystems to assure the sustainable development of the Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape and Sarangani Bay Protected Seascape, Balasiao Watershed and Malalag Bay. The Project was implemented by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Southern Philippines. The Project's main objective is to implement an integrated environmental protection and management for critical ecosystems as imperative to sustainable development.

6. ***Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape Project (SSSP)***. The SSSP is being implemented in Verde Island Passage, Cagayan Ridge and Balabac Strait Marine Biodiversity Conservation Corridors to assess state of coastal habitats and provide scientific basis for network of MPAs in support of municipal fishery management and marine biodiversity conservation.
7. ***Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI)***. The Philippine government thru the Department of Agriculture and the DENR and partners such the Conservation International – Philippines and the World Wide Fund actively participate in the on-going development of the Plan of Action for the Coral Triangle. The Coral Triangle is considered the epicenter of marine biodiversity on Earth. The whole of the Philippines is strategically located within the Coral Triangle, the marine biological resources of which are commonly shared with other countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, and Solomon Islands.
8. Development and Implementation of a National Sustainable Development Strategy in line with the PEMSEA's Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia, focusing on the operationalization of the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy, and Scaling-up of ICM and formulation of a River basin and Coastal Area Management Framework, Promotion of Public-Private Sector Participation.

Specific to biodiversity conservation, about 29 Marine Protected Areas were established under the NIPAS Act which is categorized either as Protected Landscapes/Seascapes, Natural Parks or Marine Reserves. Of the 29, Sagay Marine Reserve, located in Sagay City, Negros Occidental was enacted by Congress under Republic Act 9106 on 14 April 2001. To date, there are 331 existing marine protected areas, covering MPAs established by the local government units and by the national government by virtue of the NIPAS Act.

Clearly, the Philippines remains as one of the leads in coastal resource management in Asia – continues to be a learning destination. With a lot of challenges ahead, this is one of the accomplishments we are steadfast to maintain.