



Implementing the Strategic Action Programme for the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (SCS SAP Project)

FIRST MEETING OF REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WETLANDS

*Teleconference, 7 December 2021
13.00 – 17.00 Indochina time (ICT)*

**National Presentations on
SAP implementation
PHILIPPINES**



UNOPS

SAP Evaluation (2008-2021)

Key achievements

- **Approval of the Philippine-authored CMS and Ramsar Resolutions** on promoting the conservation and wise use of intertidal wetlands and ecologically associated habitats (CMS Res. 12.25 and Ramsar Res. XIII.20)
- **Approval of a national policy on biological diversity** in the Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor by virtue of Executive Order 578, and **technical guidelines on the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program** through the DENR Administrative Order 2016-26
- **Development and implementation of the National Wetlands Action Plan 2011-2016 and the Coastal and Marine Ecosystems Management Program**
- **Legislation of 5 protected areas with intertidal wetlands along and draining into the West Philippine Sea in 2018** through the Expanded-National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (RA 11038)
- **Establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and MPA Networks (MPANs)**

Progress towards achieving SAP targets

- **Development of management plan for the Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape (MSPLS)**
- **Development of the Manila Bay Sustainable Development Master Plan**

Status of SAP sites

- **Declaration of protection status for priority wetland areas** – 2 Ramsar Sites in 2012 (Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park & Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park); and 1 in 2021 (Sasmuan Pampanga Coastal Wetlands)
- **Continually managing the country's first locally managed Wetland and Nature Park** in Balanga, Bataan



LPPCHEA
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SAP Evaluation (2008-2021)

| SAP Output/Target | Implication at the national level | Details at sites | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Outcome 1.4 Integrated management of 783,900 ha of coastal wetland at 19 sites, including habitat restoration and protection strengthened at priority locations | 102,990.73 ha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malampaya Sound PLS - 52,112 ha Manila Bay - 34,674 ha Sasmuan Bangkung Malapad CHEA – 405.5 ha Apo Reef Natural Park – 15,799.23 ha | |
| 1.4.1 Integrated management plans developed and under implementation for at least 3 lagoons 9 estuaries, 5 tidal flats, 1 peat swamp and 1 non-peat swamp and associated policy, legal & institutional reforms | 102,990.73 ha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape - 52,112 ha Manila Bay - 34,674 ha Sasmuan Bangkung Malapad CHEA – 405.5 ha Apo Reef Natural Park – 15,799.23 ha | |
| 1.4.2 Declaration of at least 7 wetland areas with protection status (i.e., non-hunting area, nature reserves, protected areas, Ramsar Sites). | 8 sites | Declared as Ramsar Sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park – 22,202 ha Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat Ecotourism Area - 181.63 ha Sasmuan Pampanga Coastal Wetlands – 3,667.3 ha | Proclaimed as PAs (E-NIPAS): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agoo Damortis PLS – 10,774.68 ha Masinloc and Oyon Bay PLS – 7,558 ha LPPCHEA/Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park – 181.63 ha Taal Volcano PL – 62,292.16 ha Apo Reef Natural Park – 15,799.23 ha |
| 1.4.3 Adoption of a regional estuary monitoring scheme and its national implementation [based on SAP results framework] | 1 site | Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape | |

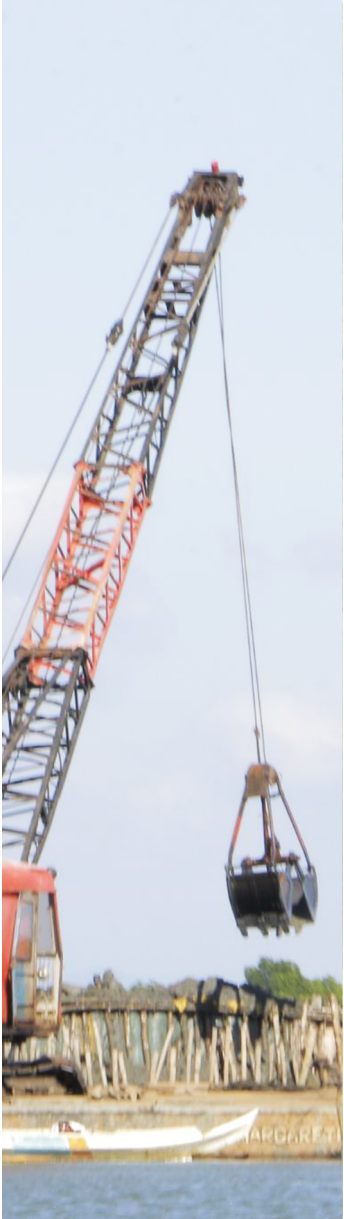


SAP Implementation: Best Practices



- Institutionalization of Local Coastal Resource Management Plans
- Recognition of good practices in managing marine protected areas through performance-based mechanisms
- Empowering and engaging local communities





SAP Implementation: Challenges

Gaps or challenges that should be prioritized to achieve long-term sustainability of actions

- **Weak enforcement of easement regulations and foreshore policies** resulting to lack of or premature issuances of certifications to uncontrolled reclamation projects, development activities/economic expansion
- **Weak consideration of biodiversity concerns** in the environmental impact system of development projects along intertidal wetlands
- **Inadequate knowledge on the ecological importance of intertidal wetlands** such that their conversion is usually not given much attention in risk assessment processes
- **Sedimentation and pollution** from land-based activities and mining/dredging activities
- **Reduced water retention capacity of estuaries and other aquatic ecosystems** resulting to an increased retention time of sediments and pollutants in its system



SAP Implementation: Consultations

National consultations, site visits, data and information gathering conducted and key findings

- **Submissions of data from the DENR Regional Offices** of the project demonstration sites through usual reporting
- **Regular Asian Waterbird Census** all over the country every January
- **Validation and mapping of Maragondon Estuary** from upstream to coastal areas on 7-9 May 2021
- **National Consultation-Workshop** to gather initial site information from the local wetland managers and to identify activities and targets under the program, held on 10-11 June 2021
- **Planning-Workshop** for the Designation of Critical Habitat within Manila Bay on 12-13 July 2021
- **Consultation-Workshop** on the Development of the Biodiversity Off-Set Management Plan for the New Manila International Airport in Bulacan on 3-4 November 2021, including site validation of possible off-set areas and site visit to proposed critical habitat



SAP Implementation: Site selection

Change in sites and rationale

| Initial Sites | Area (ha) |
|--|---------------|
| Pansipit River Estuary | 24,515 |
| Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape Estuary | |
| Manila Bay Tidal Flats | 30,000 |
| Total Area | 54,515 |



| Final Sites | Area (ha) |
|--|---------------|
| Maragondon River Estuary | 10,759 |
| Malampaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape Estuary | 52,112 |
| Manila Bay Tidal Flats | 34,674 |
| Total Area | 97,545 |



Pansipit River
© Batangas Republic, 2020



SAP Implementation: Activities

Proposed activities to achieve the projects outputs

How do they build upon best practices within the region?

- Assessment and mapping of biodiversity and habitats of the intertidal wetlands
- Capacitation of key stakeholders
- Development and/or updating of management plans
- Awareness campaigns and public consultations
- Participation in the development and implementation of regional estuary monitoring scheme
- Designation of Malapaya Sound Protected Landscape and Seascape as a Ramsar Site, and establishment of a coastal wetlands in the municipality of Bulacan along Manila Bay, as Critical Habitats



Malapaya Sound PLS
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Final considerations

Final considerations

How can lasting and sustainable change be achieved?

- COVID-19 restrictions might lead to delay of execution of activities and/or extension of project duration
- Sustainability may be achieved through:
 - Adoption of the Integrated Management Plan of the Local Government Units
 - Inclusion of sustainable financial schemes in the management plan
 - Budget sourcing from external sources (e.g. Integrated Protected Area Fund, donors, grants)
 - Digitized campaigns and call for actions
 - Capacitation of the Peoples Organizations on technical writing and grant proposal writing
 - Reform of local policies and laws including formulation and enactment of municipal ordinances for coastal habitat management
 - Incorporation of regulations in the management plans for coastal and marine habitats



Manila Bay
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Thank You!



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