

2008

ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

PALAWAN COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF



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Message



Facing the Crisis, Accepting the Challenge, Keeping the Pace Forward!

Year 2007 ended with Filipinos hoping for a brighter Philippines, as in that year, the country registered the strongest economic growth in a generation. Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo announced in her 2008 SONA "*inflation was low, the peso strong and a million new jobs were created*". The year 2008 would have been a promising year.

Unfortunately, it was not so. 2008 was in fact a crucial period in world history.

At the advent of this year, the world was shaken by the global financial crisis, the worst since the Great Depression and the end of World War II. This year witnessed the roller coaster ride of oil price hikes, high food prices, high unemployment rate and looming economic recession in the US and other markets. It moved like a terrible tornado around the globe, wiping away gains, erasing progress.

To ease the gap of this economic downtrend and remedy this situation, it warranted maximization of natural resource use. Palawan is not freed from this worldwide stress, the national government urged all sectors for a collective support, which will have implications on the integrity of the environment as economic activities are highly environment-dependent. This was highly challenging for Palawan. Would this mean a more lenient consideration over investments on agri-business, fishery and mining sectors? This was tough, as our guiding principle, by virtue of the SEP Law, will always be Sustainable Development!

Consequently, the national government opened the gate for mining as a flagship investment in the country, Palawan needs to guard its doors. The record of MGB was alarming as it indicated that there are more than 350 mining applications pending for Palawan. Would it mean compromising our sustainable development option? It must be recalled that at this time, we are at the height of our quest towards establishing more protected land and seascapes as we believe these are better strategies in managing our critical resources. It was our way of keeping Palawan's resilience over approaching crisis like this one.

The ever persistent question again reverberates: allow more investments to ease economic crisis or sustain efforts on environmental protection?

This was the immediate concern we faced in 2008, and in dealing so, we stand by the principles of the SEP Law: *the leverage of environment, economy and people must be kept balanced, thus the sustainable development option*. Because of this, the global crisis did not hit us helpless and unprepared. We stood firm on our position not to compromise our forest and biodiversity against gains from mining, and we can not let go of our coral reefs against export income, but we can upgrade the economy via appropriate and feasible alternatives where mining and fishing maybe allowed but forests, biodiversity and corals still flourish. The SEP Law has provided us this foresight that served as our early warning device.

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Consequently, the PCSD sponsored consultative Summits on Mining and Live Fish purposely to elicit multi-sectoral positions. This resulted to PCSD urging the DENR not to process mining applications within Mt. Mantalingahan Range as we are proposing it to become a Protected Area. It is along this line that the provincial government passed an Ordinance banning additional small scale mining in the province. Shortly after, we proposed for establishing quota in trading-out of live reef fish for food species to sustain the industry. Also in 2008, we revitalized the guidelines in establishing communal forests in at least 5 pilot sites to address lumber requirements of Palawan. Aggressive promotion of initiatives in the six (6) Community Learning sites for the Community-based ECAN Coastal Resource Management had been intensified. In addition the PCSDS continuously pursued the implementation of other special laws like the Caves Act, Wildlife Act, Chainsaw Act, Solid Waste Management Act, and PCSD policies especially the SEP Clearance System, among many others.

To harness stakeholder participation, the PCSD directed the PCSDS to strengthen partnership with locals especially the communities in managing their resources. While supporting the socio-economic agenda of the national government, the PCSD is keeping the advocacy of judicious resource management alive.

We realized that the decision in dealing with the reverberating question isn't that hard after all, because until today, we are guided by the principles of sustainable development and the words of late Gov. Salvador P. Socrates "...in so far as the protection of Palawan's environment is concerned, it is absolute, there is no compromise, it is non-negotiable...".

It is at this juncture that I congratulate the PCSD, the staff and the entire constituents of Palawan for continuously collaborating with us. The milestones of accomplishments chronicled in this 2008 Public Report, would not have been possible without these support.

In the years to come, we are bound to encounter tougher challenges. Climate Change, for instance, is inevitable. We should strengthen our ties, so that together, we heighten our resiliency to such formidable challenges.

Let's continue our forward steps in ensuring that the vision of the SEP Law will be achieved. It is not far-fetched, as the people of Palawan have always been behind us.

Thank you all for being one with me in believing that "*kapag sama-sama, kayang-kaya*".

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

HON. JOEL T. REYES
Chairman, PCSD
Governor, Province of Palawan

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Executive Directors 's Note



Overcoming turbulent circumstances!

A famous educator Hamilton Holt once said “*Nothing worthwhile comes easily. Work, continuous work and hard work, is the only way to accomplish results that lasts*”. This popular adage bespeaks of the PCSDS 2008 performance. Behind the curtain of an uncertain year, we end up inspired and celebrating for despite the global economic crisis, the PCSD and its staff managed to conquer 98% of its target in 2008, a record worth celebrating.

We share this small victory with all our partners: the LGUs, communities, NGOs, other government agencies, private sector, enforcement agencies, without them, it would have been a tougher battle for PCSD and the staff.

Over the year, the PCSDS provided technical support to the PCSD in formulating timely and relevant policies that rationalized Palawan’s development. It strengthened links with various stakeholders, enforced environmental laws, and aggressively waved the advocacy of sustainable development. Specifically, PCSDS database have now been updated with results of its coastal resource assessments, project evaluations, water (river and coastal) quality analysis, and policy researches. Stakeholders’ knowledge has been raised about climate change, PCSD policies and activities through intensive multi-media and visibility events like conferences, summits, *pulong-pulong* and guest briefings, links with partners have been glued through conduct of collaborative projects, such as the partnership with World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International Philippines, Local Government Units, Government agencies, field based ECAN Boards, private sectors, and enforcement agencies. Enforcement of environmental laws has been stirred through multi-sectoral cooperation, and stricter scrutiny over projects securing SEP Clearances. A closer look at critical projects that concerns mining, quarrying, live fish, etc have been undertaken. Likewise is the operationalization of the Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation System and packaging of plans and programs for fund sourcing purposes.

We appreciate the inspiring directions of the PCSD. The leadership may not be hands-on, but the liberal supervision reinforces creativity and skillfulness of the PCSDS in bringing to fruition its assigned tasks.

The year maybe tough as the circumstance seemed formidable, but we survived with feathers on our cap, as we believe that “ *Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside them was superior to circumstance*”.

On behalf of the PCSDS Staff, I proudly present to you all the 2008 Public Report.

ROMEO B. DORADO

OIC-Executive Director, PCSDS

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I. BACKGROUND

Under the mandate of Republic Act 7611, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) over the years has grown into a policy making body that continues to upgrade its quality of service for the protection of biodiversity and the promotion of the natural endowments and capital of Palawan, where development can be sustained for future generations. Taking care of the province's unique environment creates complex problems that require an intricate problem-solving process.

PCSD focused on the formulation of policies for the utilization of ECAN zones to rationalise development. It also maintained collaboration with Local Government Units (LGUs) and other institutions in giving policy directions for sustainable development and creating systems, as well as implementing activities for the maintenance of ecological balance



In addition, the Council also implements R.A. 9147 or 'The Wildlife Act of the Philippines, R.A. 9072 or 'The Caves and Cave Resources Management and Protection Act, and R.A. 9175 or the Chainsaw Act



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II. Highlights of Accomplishments based on Major Final Outputs (MFOs)

MFO 1. Approved and Issued Plans, Policies and Guidelines

A. *Conduct of Policy Researches, Studies, Resource Assessments and Inventories*

The Staff continued to pursue policy researches and studies to guide the Council in its policy-making functions. There were four (4) policy studies targeted and accomplished for the year that resulted into the issuances of policies and guidelines by the Council.

The SEP Clearance System was initially assessed/reviewed, its implementing rules and regulations revised through the issuance of PCSD Administrative Order No. 4. Discussions were held with the LGUs in relation to the study being conducted to determine wood supply and demand at the municipal level. The study led to the formulation of the Guidelines for the Pilot Testing and Implementation of Communal Forestry to sustain wood supply in Palawan.



Similarly, monitoring of coastal areas and coastal resources were conducted in Brooke's Point and Balabac by the Staff. Results of monitoring study were discussed with officials of the LGUs concerned for the resource users to be able to transpose the issues of degradation and wanton use into resource protection initiatives and income generating activities.



Further research studies were conducted on marine resources in the Calamianes particularly on reef condition in relation to the establishment of Marine Protected Areas in the region. This is considered a pro-active action by the Council and the Staff amidst the condition of declining fish catch in the area.



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B. Formulation and Approval of Policies and Guidelines

Serving as the Secretariat to the Council eight (8) PCSD regular meetings and four (4) executive meetings were conducted. A total of 24 resolutions of various concerns were passed as follows:

- o 4 resolutions in support of the Chainsaw Act,
- o 4 resolutions strengthened the implementation of the Wildlife Act.
- o 6 resolutions were formulated to reinforce the implementation of the SEP and its Clearance System.
- o 4 resolutions were passed to complement the implementation of the Environmentally Critical Areas Network (ECAN)
- o 2 resolutions created in relation to the rights of the indigenous communities.
- o 2 resolutions to regulate mining in Palawan.
- o 1 resolution to implement the Quota System on the Live Reef Fish for Food Trade in Palawan.
- o 1 resolution was passed pertaining to the operation of the Council.

Moreover, policy researches and studies shore up the formulation of five (5) policies and guidelines that were passed/approved by the Council for implementation. Below are the policies and guidelines formulated by the Council for the year:

- o PCSD Administrative Order No. 6-08 was implementing the revised SEP Clearance System giving the system added strength through the imposition of fees and penalties.



- Guidelines in the Identification and Protection of the ECAN Special Management Areas was formulated to identify critical areas within the ECAN framework requiring special protection and management.

- Guidelines for the implementation of PCSD policy on quota system for the Live fish Industry

- Policy requiring PCSD review and endorsement of the municipality's Forest and Land Use Plan prior to submission to DENR

- Guidelines for the Pilot Testing of communal forest to guide the pilot testing of communal forestry project in four municipalities (Puerto Princesa, Taytay, Busuanga and Quezon). Documented results on this activity shall serve as a vital input into the finalization of the guidelines that has been drafted for the identification of areas for and implementation of communal forestry activities by the municipalities/LGUs in Palawan.



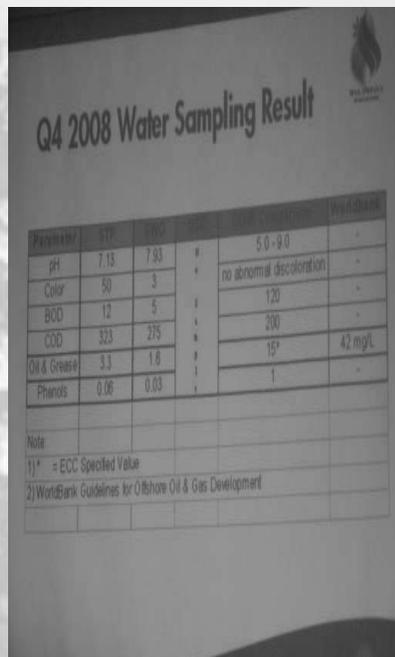
C. Review and Updating of SEP

A forum was conducted for the review of the mechanisms supporting the Strategic Environmental Plan. The object of the provincial forum is to assess and review the implementation of the ECAN Zoning System and the support mechanisms of the SEP which are: the environmental monitoring and evaluation system, environmental education and extension, the conduct of researches and studies in support of the policy making function of the Council. Currently, policies and guidelines are being drafted to further strengthen existing SEP mechanisms.



D. Operationalization of the Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (EMES)

The operation of EMES assesses the effects and impacts of the implementation of SEP in Palawan, based on the monitoring parameters identified to measure environmental conditions. Resources data on fishery and the benthic environment, land resources and forestry, as well as water resources were collected which form part of the Natural Resources Accounting System for Palawan. Twenty six (26) river systems were continuously being monitored. There were 235 water samples collected and analyzed.



Parameter	Q4	Q3	Q2	Q1	Standard	Remarks
pH	7.13	7.33	7.33	7.33	5.0-9.0	
Color	50	3	3	3	no abnormal discoloration	
BOD	12	5	5	5	120	
COD	323	275	275	275	200	
Oil & Grease	3.3	1.8	1.8	1.8	15*	42 mg/l
Phenols	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.03	1	

Note:
1) * = ECC Specified Value
2) WorldBank Guidelines for Offshore Oil & Gas Development



The six rainfall data stations established were assessed to be non-functioning due to the deterioration of rain gauges occurring through the years. An assessment report on the condition of rain gauges was made and justification for replacement was submitted.



The GIS facility and PCSDS Environmental Laboratory were operated under the EMES in support to planning, implementation and monitoring.

MFO 2. Advocacy, Technical Assistance & Other Support Services Provided



A. *Advocacy and IEC*

Through the use of the tri-media, information and education campaign activities were directed to wean the people away from destructive activities that could offset the benefits achieved from the implementation of SEP. For the year, there were twelve



Moreover, an advocacy drive was carried out to disseminate policies, guidelines and resolutions issued by the Council. Orientation seminars were conducted relative to the policies being advanced as well as briefings and presentations to stakeholders.

A quick response system was also implemented during the year through the reactivation of PCSDKonek. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed by a Multi-partite Team organised through the environmental education program of the PCSDS.



B. Capacity and Institution Building

Capacity and institution building is an ongoing process through which the staff, organisations and stakeholders enhance their abilities to meet the challenges of achieving sustainable development in Palawan. The role of PCSDS is to facilitate learning by providing training opportunities to partners.



During the year, there were 50 Wildlife Enforcement Officers trained and sworn in as WEO's of PCSDS. Paralegal trainings were also conducted in handling enforcement matters. Teachers' and trainers' training were also conducted for the handling of environmental education in both formal and informal learning sites and venues.



The ECAN Boards in the municipalities of Roxas, Dumarán, Araceli, Puerto Princesa, Española, and Brooke's Point were reactivated during the year. The ECAN Board functions as the mini-PCSD at the municipal level that handles activities relative to the implementation of SEP and the protection of natural resources in their respective areas.

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The Council and the Staff are mandated to align plans and programs in Palawan according to the SEP framework. Along this line, technical assistance were accorded to the LGUs in the preparation of the Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan harmonising the plan within the SEP framework.

The staff assisted the NGOs and LGUs in the implementation of environmental laws at the municipal level



C. Preparation/Updating of Management Plans and Programs

The Management Plans of the established ECAN-based CRM Learning Sites in the municipalities of Quezon, San Vicente, Taytay, and Puerto Princesa City were updated based on the new information gained through the community. The plans were revised to accommodate existing challenges in the locality.

Moreover, project proposals which centres on vital activities to be undertaken in Palawan were prepared and submitted to funding institutions. These are proposals for resource valuation in two areas in southern Palawan, carrying capacity study in select mining areas, and a proposal to undertake a project displaying zero carbon in resorts in Palawan.



MFO 3. SEP Guidelines Rules, Regulations and Other Special laws Enforced and Monitored

A. Enforcement of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Laws in Palawan



In conjunction with its mandate to implement the SEP Act, the Council is likewise mandated to implement related laws such as the Wildlife Act, the Caves Act and the Chainsaw Act.

In the implementation of the *Wildlife Act*, the Wildlife Management Committee was created in Quezon, Palawan. A Wildlife Rescue Centre was likewise established in the same municipality. Meanwhile, fifty (50) Wildlife Enforcement Officers were trained for the enforcement of the Act at the local level and two (2) multi-partite MOA were signed to create Wildlife Trade Monitoring Units in Palawan. The PCSD is the agency recognised by CITES to implement the CITES protocol in Palawan.





On the other hand, in relation to the implementation of the *Caves and Cave Resources Management and Protection Act* in Palawan, there were three caves identified and profiled: 2 in Calamianes and 1 in Cagayancillo. Moreover, initial information collection and profiling of caves were undertaken in Elli, Sayson and Dimasuay caves in El Nido and the Tabon cave in Quezon, Palawan.

Consequently, there were fifty (50) chainsaw units inventoried/registered under the implementation of the *Chainsaw Act*. Continued monitoring of the use of previously registered chainsaws was also undertaken.



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B. Monitoring of ECAN Implementation

There were seven (7) ECAN-based CRM Learning Sites established by PCSD in different municipalities in Palawan. These learning sites showcase ecosystems based management espoused in the ECAN framework, at the same time address the issues of access to resources, resource management and utilisation and poverty. These learning sites were continuously monitored during the year. Assessments were made based on the management plans formulated for each learning site thus, a system of validation and feedbacking as well as a continuing consultation with the community was instituted. In subsequence, this system was replicated in two (2) other ECAN-based CRM sites established in Barangays Aberawan and New Ibajay in El Nido.

C. Management of Calauit Game Preserve and Wildlife Sanctuary (CGPWS)

For the year, the implementation of activities within the CGPWS was focused on the maintenance of endemic and exotic (African) animal species, maintenance of forage areas, conduct of inland and sea patrol and management of tourists visiting the place..



A total of 1,200 population of endemic animal species were maintained within the range while the population of exotic (African) animals remained at 161. A forage area of 29 hectares was also maintained primarily for grazing. Inland and sea patrolling were conducted 1008 times during the year to protect the animals from poachers and other threats. Also, the staff provided orientation/briefings and guided tours to 1,867 tourists and guests that arrived in the area during the year. This is translated to an income for the National Treasury of PhP 203, 350.00 in the form of tourism receipts and fees.



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D. Issuance and Compliance Monitoring of SEP Clearance and Permits

Relative to the implementation of the SEP Clearance System, there were 135 SEP Clearance and Permits issued by the Council to projects and undertakings in Palawan for the year. Likewise, 187 Livefish operators were given accreditations by the Council to operate in Palawan. To validate compliance on the terms and conditions embodied in the clearances and permits issued by the Council, the Staff undertook compliance monitoring on 260 on-going projects.



E. Adjudication, Litigation and Mediation Activities



There were a total of 110 cases reported, investigated and documented by the Staff during the year. In relation, there were 89 cases filed and litigated in the PCSD Adjudication Board on violations of PCSD administrative orders. Meanwhile, there were 106 cases mediated and resolved based on rules.



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III. General Administrative and Support Services (GASS)



Administrative support services were provided to PCSD and Staff in undertaking planned activities for the year. The operation of the MIS offered a vital support to the decision-making function of the management through the monitoring of activities, identifying operation bottlenecks, and rendering feed backs. It produced 4 performance reports and 1 annual report for the year. Moreover, the Staff as a secretariat to the Council, provided technical support, coordinated and documented meetings, drafted resolutions and circulated policies and guidelines issued.





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