

PALAWAN COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Accomplishment Report

CY 2010

BACKGROUND

The Strategic Environmental Plan (SEP) for Palawan Act (RA 7611) is the legal basis for the creation of the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD). It is a national law of local application providing a comprehensive framework to sectors of development in Palawan in the implementation of sustainable programs and projects. The adoption and implementation of the plan is a collective concern of the PCSD, a multi-sectoral body, with a professional staff (the PCSD Staff) as its administrative arm. The Act mandated the PCSD to provide a mechanism for the implementation of SEP through policy direction and governance. It aims to protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources within the fragile environment of the province. The SEP framework provides a guide to government agencies and institutions in the formulation and implementation of environmental and developmental plans, programs and projects affecting the province of Palawan.

The staff provides technical inputs to the Council in setting policy directions to meet the SEP objectives. Its concern is generally based on the major final outputs (MFOs) approved by the DBM. Activities subsumed within these MFOs include foremost, the formulation of policies by the Council supported by policy researches and studies. The implementation of these policies is sustained by environmental education and extension and policy advocacy for policies to take root in, and appreciated by communities. On the other hand, the operationalization of Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation System (EMES) is designed to support the management of critical resources and determine strategies that would maintain the resiliency of the ecosystem which protects the province's economic base. Congruently, the PCSD also implements the SEP Clearance System and compliance monitoring to ensure the suitability of development projects within allocated ECAN zones and to maintain balance between development activities and the protection of the environment. The PCSD is also tasked to enforce special laws in Palawan such as, the Caves Act (RA 9072), the Wildlife Act (RA 9147), and the Chainsaw Act (RA 9175) purposely to reinforce its stance on the protection of the environment and sustainable development.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

MFO 1. Plans, Policies and Guidelines Approved and Issued

A. Policy Researches, Studies, Resource Assessment and Inventories Conducted

Researches and studies were conducted to assist the Council in the formulation of policies for the implementation of SEP and ECAN. On policy research, resource valuation study and cost benefit analysis of Mt. Bulanjao Range, and the carrying capacity study of the riverine environment of the municipality of Aborlan in relation to existing river quarries were conducted during the year. The economic valuation of Mt. Bulanjao Range would show its total economic value and development options while the study conducted on the carrying capacity of rivers would show the current stock and exploitation limits as well as the optimum level and rate of extraction for Aborlan rivers.

B. Policies and Guidelines Formulated and Approved

On policy studies conducted, an implementation review of the policy on live reef fish for food (LRFF) was done exploring other options for implementation strategy in relation to the amended Provincial

Ordinance No. 941. A review was also conducted on whether researches undertaken by Palawan Research and Development Consortium (PaRDeC) members should be exempted from the implementation of PCSD Administrative Order No. 6. Further, a MOA review was also conducted on the co-management with LGU of bird's nest, its cave habitat, bidding procedures and bid payment utilization.

At the end of the year, there were 7 policy guidelines passed by the Council in relation to researches and policy studies conducted.

C. Operationalization of EMES

The operation of EMES establishes indicators of success for the implementation of SEP and ECAN. It conducts monitoring of the status of resources in Palawan. Along this line, there were 4 types of resources data collected (forest, agriculture, fresh water and coastal marine). Four rain gauges were also installed during the year to measure precipitation level in areas with micro-climates not supported by PAG-ASA. Monitoring of water quality in 26 rivers throughout the province were undertaken to observe changes and causes of such change for future study and policy decision. Coastal resource monitoring was conducted in the municipalities of Cuyo and Dumaran. The monitoring studies in these areas would show the status of coastal and benthic environments beneficial for policy makers and resource users in addressing local issues that would affect them. The results of EMES studies are contained in EMES report displaying the status and condition of Palawan's environment at the end of each year.

D. Preparation/ Updating of Plans and Programs

Moreover, the ECAN zoning system requires that ECAN zones must be supported with management plans. These in subsequence, are being used to pilot test the SEP implementation using ECAN strategy at the community (Barangay) level in the form of the establishment of ECAN learning sites. During the year, there were 7 existing management plans reviewed and updated.

In relation, an action planning workshop was conducted towards the end of the year to draft the organization's operational plan for CY 2011. The thrusts and priorities were reviewed and issues were also dealt with in the preparation of the plan.

MFO 2. Advocacy, Technical Assistance and other Support Services Provided

E. Advocacy and IEC

Policy advocacies were conducted to support the implementation of policies and programs formulated by the Council. For the year, there were 24 communities reached through IEC while 10 environmental presentations were done to select groups. In support of the activity, there were 5,000 information materials produced, 50 hours of radio broadcasts aired and 96 press releases made. Included also in the information campaign are the topics of climate change, responsible mining and various policies and guidelines recently passed by the Council.

F. Institutional and Capacity Building

Community and staff trainings were conducted specifically on the adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change, water resources conservation in support of the national government thrust and on SEP and ECAN implementation. There were 8 trainings conducted along this line and 15 ECAN Boards strengthened/reactivated to assist in the implementation of ECAN and SEP at the municipal level.

Congruently, there were 97 protected areas inventoried during the year for further capacity building activities and for future strengthening of PA management strategies in Palawan.

G. Local Plans and Programs Harmonized and Aligned with SEP

In the operation of the District Management Offices, there were 10 LGUs and other organizations assisted in the implementation of ECAN and SEP. Moreover, there were 5 ECAN maps updated in assistance to the preparation of the LGUs Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plans (CLUP) and in harmonizing the local CLUPs provisions with SEP.

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

H. Special ENR Laws Enforced

The PCSD is mandated to implement special laws in Palawan, specifically: RA 9174 or the Wildlife Act, RA 9072 or the Caves Act and RA 9175 or the Chainsaw Act.

Republic 9174: Wildlife Act

In the implementation of Wildlife Act, the PCSDS has postured as the CITES management authority in Palawan. As such, there were 24 wildlife enforcement officers (WEO) trained under CITES protocol. Congruently, there were 4 meetings held with DENR and other entities for partnerships, wildlife monitoring and policy making. Procedures for the establishment of wildlife management fund had also been undertaken which only requires at this stage, fine tuning of the guidelines to operationalize. At the end of the year, there were 60 permits issued to wildlife farms and transport of various wildlife under non-critical status.

Moreover, the PCSDS Kiddies Wildlife Savers Club was organized to create awareness amongst children of 6-12 years old on the importance of biodiversity and the protection of wildlife around them. Through this strategy, the kids become promoters of the program to save the wildlife and to be aware of the laws that protect it.

Republic Act 9072: Caves Act

There were 4 caves identified and profiled while 5 caves were inspected at the course of the implementation of the Act during the year. The Palawan Caves Distribution Map is currently being drawn to show all the caves profiled and inspected in Palawan. The staff also formulated the manual for caves classification that was subsequently approved by the Council. Moreover, 4 municipalities have already signed a Memorandum of Agreement with PCSDS referring to cave and cave resources management.

Republic Act 9175: Chainsaw Act

The Chainsaw Act calls for the registration/permit to possess and/or use a chainsaw for legitimate purpose. The staff inventoried and registered 97 chainsaws during the year.

I. Monitoring of ECAN Implementation

The implementation of ECAN is currently being pilot tested at the Barangay level. There were 7 established Community Based Resource Management (CBRM) learning sites monitored by the staff while an additional 2 areas were identified for replication of ECAN strategies. The staff provided assistance in the implementation of livelihood projects as well as establishment of parameters for monitoring and protection of natural resources in the area.

J. Issuances, Compliance Monitoring of Clearances and Permits

The implementation of the SEP clearance system ensures that development activities are located in appropriate zones and are balanced with the protection of the environment. In this relation, there were 143 SEP clearances issued to project proponents and 57 accreditation permits issued to operate live fish industries. Meanwhile, 156 existing projects were monitored for compliance based on the terms and conditions stipulated in the clearance issued.

K. Adjudication, Litigation and Mediation Activities

In the operation of the PCSD Adjudication Board (PAB), the staff provided support in filing, hearing and resolution of issues brought before the PAB. There were 40 cases filed for violation of PCSD

Administrative Orders and related rules and laws while 45 cases were heard and 83 cases resolved during the year.