



2006 ANNUAL REPORT



Project Seahorse (Philippines)
Foundation for Marine Conservation

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Project Seahorse Foundation for Marine Conservation (PSF)

is the Philippines member of the international Project Seahorse family. The Project Seahorse at the University of British Columbia (UBC) Fisheries Centre serves as our international base.

Vision

A Philippines with healthy marine environments and good quality of life for coastal communities.

Mission

PSF is a national interdisciplinary organization committed to conservation of Philippines marine ecosystems through equitable sustainable use. In collaboration with stakeholders and partners in coastal communities and elsewhere, we undertake research and management initiatives for marine resources, within an ecosystem framework. We focus on Danajon Bank because this region encompasses critical marine conservation issues of the Philippines, and we use the seahorses in this region as flagship species to inspire and engage people in finding solutions to marine conservation problems.

Goal (2005-2009)

Danajon Bank serves as a model for ecosystem-based management because of its healthy marine habitats, equitable sustainable fisheries and good governance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Seahorse celebrates 10 years of international work to help secure the marine environment, with seahorses as flagship species. Taking stock of a distinctive competence in seahorse conservation, its programs, partnerships and collaborations, and the geography of its field conservation sites have diversified and expanded over the years. The Philippines remains a major frontier of this global work. The marine conservation initiatives of Project Seahorse in the country became an institution in 2003 with the consolidation of its Philippines-based programs into the Project Seahorse Foundation for Marine Conservation (PS Foundation), a Philippines registered non-government organization governed by an inter-disciplinary Board of Trustees dominated by local experts in the fields of conservation, social development, and NGO management and finance.



*Amado P. Blanco
National Director*

PS Foundation takes pride in supplementing the 10-year history of fruitful conservation work of Project Seahorse with the following conservation gains in 2006:

- The 20th, 21st, and the 22nd community-managed no-take marine protected areas (MPAs) we helped catalyse on Danajon Bank;
- Three-year management plans and one-year operational plans of 10 community-managed MPAs on Danajon Bank;
- Formation and training of MPA management councils and working groups in at least 10 fishing villages;
- Facilitated provision MPA enforcement facilities (e.g. guardhouse, spotlights, radio communication equipment) in three MPAs;
- Participation of eight international and local young professionals as volunteers in our long-running MPA survey program;
- Tracked local seahorse populations through catch landing monitoring and underwater surveys;
- KAMADA (Alliance of Small Fishers in Danajon) membership approached the 900-household level. Disney accorded a conservation hero award to KAMADA in 2006; and
- Approval of our animal and social research protocols by the Animal Care Committee and the Behavioural Research Ethics Board of the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver.

We are grateful to the **John G. Shedd Aquarium**, International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and many others. Their financial and collegial support made these conservation gains reachable. Also, we are thankful to KAMADA and our partner national agencies and local government units in central Philippines.

MPA creation and strengthening and local seahorse population research will remain at the center of our work in 2007. We will also advance the development of our programs on municipal capacity building, ecologically sustainable seaweed culture, and environmental education involving the youth. We will explore new collaborations to ensure the implementation of other vital components of the current strategic plan of PS Foundation.

2006 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MANAGING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

The Philippines Fisheries Code mandates municipal local government units to set aside 15% of municipal waters as marine protected areas. While the popularity of MPAs as a tool for biodiversity conservation and fisheries regeneration is growing among coastal communities, municipal governments are still far from meeting the 15% target. Inadequacies in financial and technical resources often derail efforts to expand the coverage of protected areas. And, resources may still be scarce, at least in the next few years.

Our MPA creation initiatives in 2006 were directed at taking advantage of the popular support for MPAs and willingness of municipal governments to complement community-led MPA creation initiatives with needed legislative support. Our short-term agenda was to catalyse active marine conservation partnerships between communities and their municipal governments, with MPA creation as the starting point.



*The village chief of Busalian, Talibon, Bohol (on barefoot) plotting on the sand the potential location of a new MPA.
Photo by A Vincent/PS-UBC*

Formation of vital social infrastructures went along with the biophysical surveys and delineation of protected areas. Necessary management and implementing bodies, such as MPA management councils, MPA enforcement teams, and community MPA monitoring teams, were initially organized in new MPA sites.

Establishing new marine protected areas

In partnership with organized fishers and municipal governments, we catalysed the establishment of three new no-take MPAs in Danajon Bank. Located in *Barangay* Busalian, Talibon, *Barangays* Gaus and Tugas in Carlos P. Garcia town in Bohol, these new community-managed MPAs have an average size of 12 hectares. The municipal council of Carlos P. Garcia already legalised the two new MPAs. Community leaders of Busalian actively lobbied for the passage of the proposed MPA ordinance. The ordinance already passed first reading by the Talibon municipal council. The Busalian community was hopeful it would be enacted by the first quarter of 2007.

Just like the new MPAs we catalysed in the past three years, the Alliance of Small Fishers in Danajon or KAMADA played a key role in creating new MPAs. KAMADA, PS Foundation and the municipal governments have been linking arms in assisting an increasing number of coastal communities set up community-based MPAs. Since 2004, this collaboration has already produced eight new MPAs, including the three in 2006.

Strengthening management of MPAs

Our works with community-based MPAs do not stop with biophysical delineation, legal declaration, and formation of management bodies. Communities must acquire the skills to effectively manage these protected areas. The long-term viability of no-take MPAs hinges on the capability of the local institutions responsible for their management. These institutions should have access to capacity building interventions, such as skills training, mentoring, and technical assistance, especially in their formation stage. Hence, capacity building is a core element of our MPA program.

In 2006, we facilitated the formation, reorganization, and training of MPA management and implementing bodies in ten coastal villages in Danajon Bank. We organized and trained Participatory Marine Sanctuary Monitoring (PMSM) teams and Sanctuary Enforcement Teams (SETs) in ten sites. Basic skills training and on-the-job coaching in community MPA monitoring and enforcement were conducted.



*Field Biologist Fermina Genson coaching a local fisher on community MPA monitoring.
Photo by R Apurado/PS Foundation*

Many of the existing MPA management bodies and working committees did not have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. We guided some of them as they went through the process of reviewing and redefining their functions.

Most MPAs in Danajon Bank have management plans that require updating. Existing plans were often vague, unrealistic, and ambitious. We assisted ten communities formulate new three-year MPA management plans. We adopted a simpler MPA planning template to keep the new management plans more realistic and measurable. We engaged the management councils, facilitated the formation of planning technical working groups, and extended technical assistance in critical planning stages. Later, our team facilitated the preparation of one-year operational plans, especially with teams charged with MPA monitoring and enforcement.



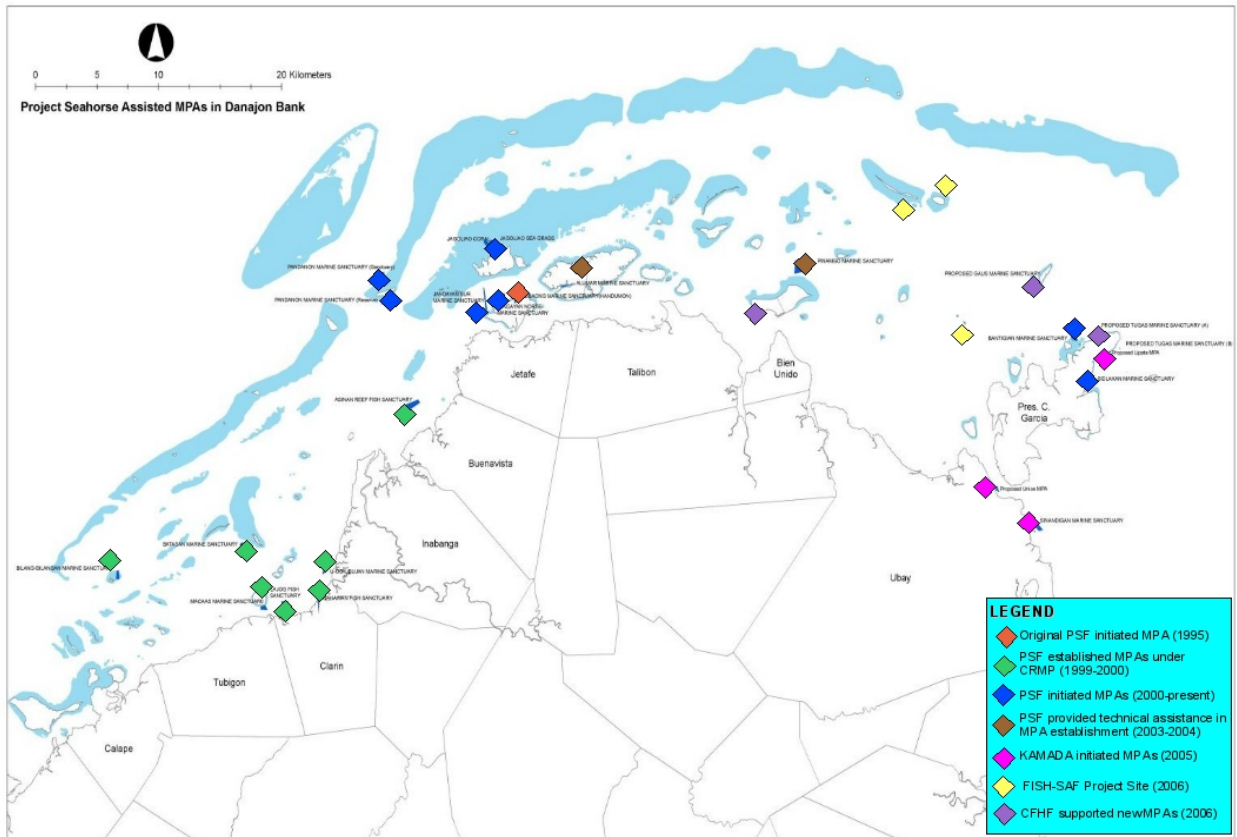
*The MPA guardhouse has become a symbol of community vigilance and hope.
Photo by A Blanco/PS Foundation*

We view management planning as an important “learning by doing” tool. We did not only help the management councils prepare new management plans, we also taught them the basic principles and techniques in planning.

MPAs are not a stand-alone solution. The absence of strong enforcement undermines effectiveness of MPAs. Most communities, however, lack financial resources to acquire basic support system for effective MPA enforcement. We helped three MPA management councils acquire support facilities and gadgets for enforcement, such as communication equipment, binoculars, spotlights, megaphones, and marker buoys. We also renovated two old MPA guardhouses and constructed a new one.

Building local capabilities in MPA creation and management

We supported MPA initiatives of municipal governments through technical assistance in site identification, drafting of municipal ordinance, and management planning. We engaged municipal legislators and technical staff in crucial stages of MPA creation and strengthening, providing them with opportunities for hands-on experience.



PS Foundation catalysed the creation of 22 no-take MPAs in Danajon Bank. It has been involved in the management strengthening of a few others. Map courtesy of FISH Project

We prepared simple protocols and guidelines for use by our own team and local partners while they undertake critical steps in MPA establishment and management strengthening. We prepared simple guidelines on how to form the MPA review and planning technical working groups, management councils, and the Participatory Marine Sanctuary Monitoring Teams. We adopted and promoted a standard template for MPA management plans.

Implementing a rigorous MPA monitoring entails cost. Our long-term plan is to enable communities to regularly monitor MPAs on their own, using simple tools and techniques. This type of monitoring can generate basic information that local management councils can use to continually improve the management of their MPAs. We thought that a manual would be very useful. In 2006, we refined the draft Participatory Marine Sanctuary Monitoring manual. We hope to finalize the guidelines and protocols and share them to partner communities and municipal governments after a few rounds of field application in 2007.

BIOLOGICAL AND FISHERIES RESEARCH

Long-term marine protected area monitoring

Community-based MPAs are popular among communities and municipal governments as a tool for biodiversity conservation and fisheries enhancement. There are now close to 90 MPAs in the nine Danajon Bank municipalities in Bohol. Regular monitoring helps sustain community support and, more importantly, informs continuing efforts to make MPA designs more effective with respect to their conservation and fisheries functions.

For nine consecutive years, our team has been documenting and analysing changes in fish abundance and coral recovery in eight MPAs and five control sites. The long-term MPA monitoring we have been conducting connects with an on-going larger study on MPA effectiveness, which is carried out in partnership with Project Seahorse International.

Driven by the idea of increasing international awareness on key issues affecting the marine environment in the Philippines, we have been involving young international professionals to participate in the surveys as volunteers. International and local volunteers joined our local biologists and local assistants in underwater surveys, which involved fish visual census and benthic surveys. Lieneke Marshall (Canada), Robert Curtright (USA), Stephanie Milne (Canada), Norah Saarman (USA), Noel Harder (Canada), Jeremy Raynal (US Peace Corps-Ubay, Bohol) Mia Therese Comeros (University of San Carlos, Cebu City) and Jesus Rey Dongallo (Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro City) surveyed 82 50-meter transects in 8 MPAs and five distant control sites.



International and local volunteers participate in semi-annual surveys of eight MPAs and five control sites in Danajon Bank.

Photo by B Cabrera/PS Foundation



Community MPA monitoring team members doing in-land practice on coral survey techniques.

Photo by R Apurado/PS Foundation

Feedback of results creates the vital link between research and application of new knowledge by local resource managers. Preliminary research analyses are brought back to community and municipal level resource managers and policy-makers. Discussion of the research results during these sessions provide resource managers with access to general and site-specific management recommendations. For instance, our advance analytical work on the effectiveness of community-based MPAs suggests that fish populations improve better in well-enforced MPAs. We use such findings to encourage improvement in the MPA law enforcement campaign at the municipal and community levels.

Food fish monitoring

A food fish monitoring project was integrated into our long-running MPA effectiveness research program. Piloted in both adjacent and distant fishing grounds associated with three well-established MPAs in Bohol, the primary objective of this study is to examine if MPAs provide



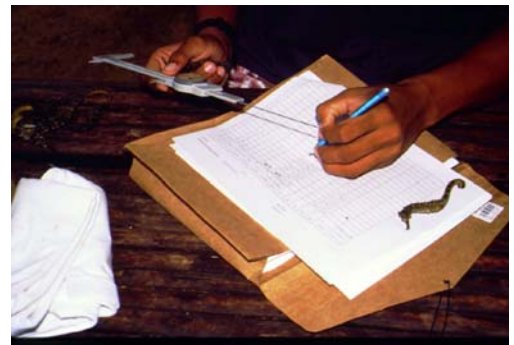
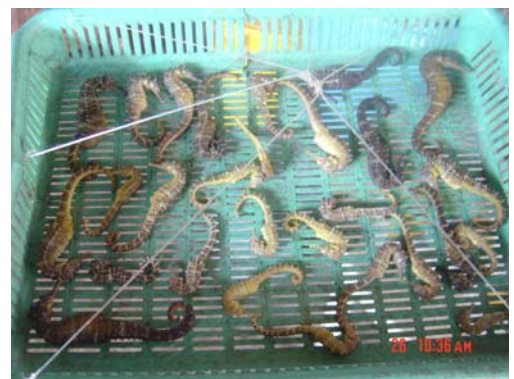
Documenting impacts of MPAs on local fisheries is vital. We will use future finding to improve MPA designs. Photo by A Blanco/PS Foundation

benefits to local fisheries. This research complements our long-term MPA monitoring program, which looks at impacts of protection on fish populations, including seahorses, and coral cover inside and outside protected zones. After a series of community consultations and project orientation, the research was launched in fishing villages in three Bohol municipalities. We trained local fishers to collect and record catch landing data. With guidance from international colleagues, we did preliminary data analysis. We will utilize results of our analysis to refine the research design.

Seahorse population monitoring

Our seahorse population research in Danajon Bank are aimed at understanding how exploited populations in known fishing grounds respond to changes in fishing pressures and how local seahorse populations respond to MPA as a management tool.

In May 2004, the listing of seahorses in Appendix II of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) took effect. While the international agreement allows regulated trade in species listed in Appendices II and III, the Philippines Fisheries Code bans fishing and trade of species listed in any CITES appendix. We adopted a self-imposed moratorium on monitoring the local seahorse fishery before the international implementation of the CITES listing. However, after realizing that the local seahorse fishery continued despite the local ban, we re-launched our monitoring activities with the intention of understanding how the domestic ban is impacting on wild seahorse populations.



Newly caught seahorses being sun-dried (top photo). Trained PS Foundation local assistants measure landed seahorses as part of a seahorse fishery monitoring (below). Photos by F Genson/PS Foundation and PS-UBC

We employed both fishery dependent and fishery independent methods to detect changes in the local seahorse populations, especially population density and distribution, size and sex structures, and seasonality. Overall, the 2006 seahorse catch data affirmed that an underground seahorse fishery exists on Danajon Bank. New seahorse buyers emerged in new locations, suggesting that fishers in villages outside of our study sites were also collecting seahorses in 2006. Emergence of new buyers and higher buying prices both suggest an increase in demand of seahorses.

We tracked fishers' voluntary compliance to the 10-cm minimum size limit adopted by CITES. It was noteworthy that the level of voluntary compliance to the minimum size limit of 10 cm appeared high. Majority (over 94%) of seahorses caught were bigger than the recommended 10-cm minimum size limit, suggesting fishers' compliance to the minimum size limit adopted internationally by CITES. The information campaign about minimum size limit organized by our partner fishers' alliance before May 2004 appeared to be "effective".



Dried Hippocampus comes. An international accord allows sustainable trade of seahorses. However, the Philippines Fisheries Code bans the seahorse fishery since May 2004.
Photo by F Genson/PS Foundation

Our catch landing monitoring recorded a total of 4,714 seahorses in the two sites in 2006. We observed that the total seahorse catch was 10% lesser than in 2005. Approximately, each individual fisher had a daily catch ranging from 3-7 seahorses.

We also started gathering information for a case study on the socio-economic significance of the seahorse fishery to local fishers. The study sites are two villages with long history of seahorse fishery. Data for the lean fishery season (August-October 2006) were collected and peak season data will be collected in March-May 2007. A report on this study will be prepared in the third quarter of 2007. We will use our findings to strengthen our advocacy to harmonize a particular section of the Philippines Fisheries Code with CITES.

Monitoring seahorse population response to protection

Our research focusing on a seahorse population inside a no-take zone is relevant in a region where MPAs enjoy popular support and where seahorse fishery was very active. Since 2001, we have been studying seahorse population trends inside the Handumon MPA. The goals of this long-term monitoring project are to (a) study unexploited population of *H. comes* in order to infer aspects of its biology, which may guide to management and (b) assess the effect of MPAs as a management tool for seahorses.

Our understanding of population density, distribution, and sex and size structures of unexploited population of *H. comes* improved with the addition of the 2006 monitoring data. Preliminary data

analysis affirmed a previous finding that while seahorse numbers did not increase substantially within no-take zones, seahorses inside the MPA were generally larger than those at fished sites. We also noted a steady growth in size and declines in number of pregnant male seahorses towards the end of locally known peak (Mar-May) and lean (Aug-Sep) seasons. Most seahorses sighted in 2006 measured 16 cm indicating an increase from the 15 cm recorded in 2005. Our research, which uses tagging technique, confirmed site fidelity attribute of seahorses as well. While a good number of tagged seahorses sighted the MPA were tagged between July and October 2004, a seahorse tagged in July 2003 was also sighted.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES FOR MARINE CONSERVATION

KAMADA remained the focal point of organizational development and technical capability building interventions in 2006. Interventions came in the forms of basic theoretical and skills inputs and follow-through coaching, especially for executive committee members and local community organizers of the alliance. Federation leadership, MPA management skills, and coastal law enforcement were key areas of intervention.

Technical assistance in planning was equally profound in 2006. We facilitated a mid-year review of the 2006 operational plan of KAMADA and started facilitating the evaluation of its existing strategic plan. We facilitated the formulation of three-year strategic plans in three fishers' organizations. Strategic planning exercises were preceded by organizational diagnosis and training needs assessments. These assessments ensured that the strategic plans are feasible and include much-needed capacity building activities. Another critical point of intervention was strengthening the membership of the alliance. We guided the implementation of the alliance's members-in-good-standing (MIGS) policy, which led to the exclusion of inactive affiliates and the recruitment of stronger and more mature new affiliates. While the number of affiliates (21) remained at the 2005 level, the number of fisher-household members increased to 895 by yearend.



*Mr. Dionisio Deiparine, KAMADA president, receiving the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund Conservation Hero plaque from Dr. Amanda Vincent.
Photo by PS-UBC*

While building KAMADA's capability as regional partner in the establishment of community-managed MPAs, we helped ensure that its level of involvement in the management of MPAs in communities where it has affiliates remained significant and vibrant. In relation to this, we encouraged local and federation-level KAMADA leaders to seek membership in various MPA management structures in their respective communities. An average of seven KAMADA leaders became members of MPA management councils and monitoring teams in each MPA site.

The year 2006 saw increased KAMADA involvement in actual project implementation. We provided technical support to KAMADA while it implemented its first two small projects. The first project grant involved modelling of a fishers-assisted approach to municipal fishers registration. The second project grant provided KAMADA some funding to consult small-scale fishers across the Danajon Bank and involve them in developing a fishers' conservation and management agenda for the entire Danajon Bank. This project extends up to mid-2007.



*Many fishers and fishing boats in Danajon Bank remain unregistered. KAMADA implemented a pilot fishers-assisted approach to fisher and boat registration in partnership with Bien Unido, Bohol municipality, with funding from the Caucus of Development NGOs.
Photo by B Cabrera/PS Foundation*

We view small projects like these as big opportunities for KAMADA to start carving a track record in project and financial management. Thus, our interventions included technical support in detailed project implementation planning and financial systems installation.

The alliance received its first international recognition in 2006. The Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund (DWCF) awarded KAMADA as Conservation Hero for its efforts to help conserve local seahorse populations in Danajon Bank and to assist fishing villages establish MPAs for biodiversity conservation and fisheries regeneration. Of the eight 2006 DWCF Conservation

Heroes selected from hundreds of applications submitted by environmental organizations working in partnership with communities around the world, KAMADA was the only winning entry from Asia. DWCF gave KAMADA \$1,000 to support its various conservation efforts on Danajon Bank. Through a resolution, the Cebu City Council commended KAMADA for winning the international award.

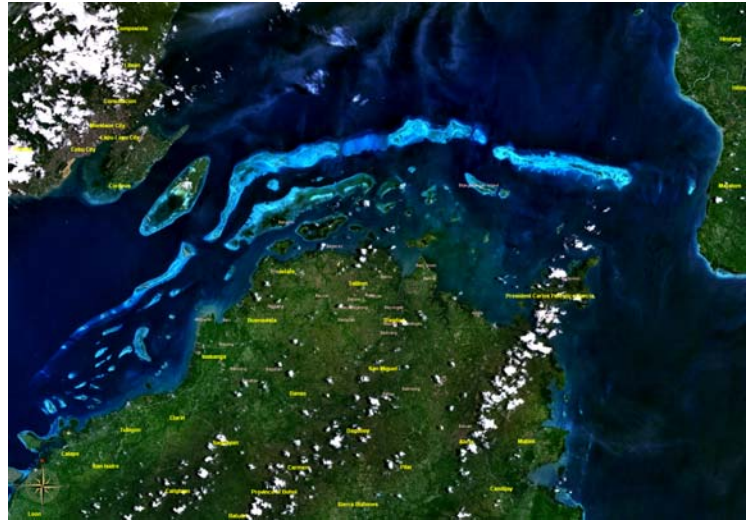
MUNICIPAL CAPACITY BUILDING

To advance our aim of building the technical capacities of local governments in MPA surveys, we started training municipal and provincial government personnel in conducting underwater fish visual census and coral surveys back in 2004. As follow-through intervention, we have been encouraging them to take part in our semi-annual underwater MPA surveys.

We are now poised to develop a capability building program for our partner municipal governments. In 2005, we assessed the training needs of municipal personnel involved in the coastal resource management. In collaboration with Project Seahorse-University of British Columbia, we advanced our analysis of the training needs. We will use results of our analysis to develop a training program to enhance the capacities of local governments in MPAs and small-scale fisheries management.

DANAJON BANK ECO-SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

KAMADA secured a grant from the Foundation for the Philippine Environment to initiate the formulation of a Danajon Bank-wide small fishers' conservation and management agenda. We provided technical assistance and staff support to KAMADA when it convened a series of consultative meetings with fellow small fishers in western Leyte, Mactan in Cebu, and Bohol. Results of these consultations will be collated and used as basis in drafting a Danajon Bank-wide small fishers' agenda. This agenda-building exercise complemented other ongoing initiatives towards ecosystem-based fisheries management of Danajon Bank.



The Danajon Bank used to be a very rich fishing ground for small fishers in Bohol, Cebu, Leyte and Southern Leyte. Habitat destruction and illegal fishing continue to threaten this rare reef formation. Satellite photo by NASA World Wind

POLICY ADVOCACY



KAMADA has become key partner in our advocacy to establish more MPAs on Danajon Bank. KAMADA received its first international award in 2006. Photo by A Blanco/PS Foundation.

Sustainable use of marine resources remained at the centre of our policy advocacies. We maximized our experience with seahorses to advance these advocacies. As mentioned earlier, while CITES allows sustainable trade of species listed in Appendices II and III, the listing of seahorse in Appendix II of CITES resulted to a domestic ban. A section in the Philippine Fisheries Code prohibits trade in all CITES listed species, forfeiting the introduction of spatial, sex, and size-based management measures developed through years of studies.

We engaged key stakeholders, such as fishers and traders, in lobbying for an amendment of the Philippine Fisheries Code to allow sustainable use of economically valuable species, such as seahorses and giant clams. Through our active lobbying, a congressman from the province of Bohol filed an amendatory bill in 2005. In 2006, we linked up with other NGOs in central Philippines and launched an information campaign to increase public awareness on the current limitations of the Philippine Fisheries Code and the necessity of amending certain sections.

In June, PS Foundation, the Bohol Alliance of NGOs (BANGON), and the Environmental Legal Assistance Centre jointly organized a public forum on the amendatory bill filed by Congressman Roberto Cajes of the second legislative district of Bohol. Representatives from various fishers' organizations, NGOs, municipal and provincial governments, and national government agencies participated in a highly animated forum on the proposed bill. A manifesto supporting the amendatory bill was signed by the participants at the forum's conclusion. The manifesto was submitted to committee on fisheries and aquatic resources of the Philippine House of Congress. Nonetheless, Congressman Cajes conceded that his bill might not be a priority in the legislative calendar of the House of Congress. The list of more urgent pending bills was long.

INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Our research activities are designed to support management. Thus, providing feedback is paramount. We organized feedback sessions to inform partner communities and municipal governments about results of our long-term MPA monitoring, food fish monitoring, and fishery independent seahorse population surveys.

A PS Foundation entry was chosen finalist in the World Bank organized *Panibagong Paraan 2006* or the Philippine Development Innovation Marketplace. *Panibagong Paraan* was a multi-partner program that encouraged and supported innovative ideas to promote "Development with Equity" in the Philippines. The exhibit we set up in one of the biggest malls in Metro Manila allowed us to tell our marine conservation stories in Danajon Bank.

We used broadcast medium to inform the public about the state of our marine environment and to enlist more support for marine conservation. Through our partnership with Mom's Radio 88.3 FM Cebu, PS Foundation was heard in six radio broadcasts in the station's Mother Nature program.



Communicating research results to various stakeholder groups is a key element of our work. Elementary school pupils in Handumon, Getafe, Bohol attending community feedback session. Photo by F Genson/PS Foundation



PS Foundation Community Organizers Perfecto Auxilio and Rosemarie Apurado using the power of the radio booth to generate public support for marine conservation. Photo by PS Foundation

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING AND NETWORKING

Municipal governments are central to the management of marine and coastal resources. Strong municipal governance is key to the long-term sustainability of coastal resources and the communities who depend on them for food and livelihood. Nonetheless, many municipal governments are lacking in capability and resources to address the various issues affecting the marine environment. Most of them welcome external support.



Participants of the “tea party” we organized with potential collaborators of the Conservation International assisted MPA “data-mining” project. Photo by PS Foundation



The outer reef of Danajon Bank is named after Caubian Islands (above) of Lapu-lapu City. Chevron-Philippines and PS Foundation started exploring a potential conservation partnership in Danajon Bank, with these islands as pivot point. Photo by A Vincent/PS-UBC

We formalized our collaborations with municipal governments in Bohol. PS Foundation signed the Memoranda of Agreement with Bien Unido and Ubay municipal governments. We also have existing memoranda of agreement with the municipalities of Tubigon, Getafe, and Carlos P. Garcia. The memoranda of agreement outline the nature and scope of our cooperation in the areas of biological, fisheries, and social research.

MPAs remained as vital convergence point of various local and even international partnerships. Our partnership with the Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation (CFHF) created three new no-take MPAs and strengthened the management of four that were already existing. CFHF also approved our second grant application, which will enable us to deliver needed follow up interventions to the newly established MPAs created in 2007. The new project will support regional consolidation of MPA experiences in Danajon Bank and skills training for local MPA managers. Our project with the Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest (FISH) Project resulted to the strengthening of three existing MPAs in Bien Unido and and Carlos P. Garcia. On top of the skills training, the management councils in the three sites received MPA enforcement support facilities from this project.

Together with Project Seahorse-UBC, we initially implemented a MPA “data-mining”, which is supported by the Marine Management Area Science Program of Conservation International. We convened government agencies and non-government organizations with

MPA programs to draw out inputs and explore possible data sharing collaborations. One of the objectives of the project is to extract as much understanding and management oriented information from existing data sets relating to no-take MPAs in Danajon Bank. The new information will be used to create continuous commitment for MPA management in the Danajon Bank focal region where MPAs are located.

PSF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The issues and challenges in marine conservation entail efficient institutions equipped with multidisciplinary skills. The current five-year strategic plan of PS Foundation calls for sustained staff retooling and systems improvement.

During the first quarter of 2006, two PS Foundation field biologists obtained international training. Angelie Nellas presented a case study in the Ecological Risk Assessment Course at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, in Oahu, Hawaii, USA. Hazel Panes visited Project Seahorse-UBC for a short in-house training focusing on MPAs and reef fisheries.



*Our animal research protocols were approved by the Animal Care Committee of the University of British Columbia, making us one of the few Philippine NGOs with international research standard.
Photo by F Genson/PS Foundation.,*

In 2006, the Animal Care Committee of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada approved the research protocols we use for a wide variety of coral reef fish and invertebrates. The committee approved our Animal Care Certificate (A06-0024) in February. In June, the Behavioural Research Ethics Board of UBC likewise approved our protocols for the conduct of social and economic research (B06-0484) in Danajon Bank. The certification issued by UBC show that our animal and socio-economic research protocols meet international standards.

Our MPA and small-scale fisheries research activities in Danajon Bank require a lot of diving activities. The Board of Trustees of PS Foundation stressed that safety is supreme by adopting the Diving and Water Surveys Safety Protocols. These protocols are guides to the health and safety of all divers and non-divers (e.g. boat operators and local assistants) who participate in PS Foundation research and management activities involving underwater dives, snorkeling, and other associated sea-borne procedures. Interested parties can acquire free copies of these protocols from the PS Foundation national office. Development of a more comprehensive Marine Safety Protocols, which would incorporate the existing Diving and Water Surveys Protocols as key section, was in progress.

Basic legal documents of PS Foundation were reviewed and updated in order to further strengthen internal governance mechanisms. The Board of Trustees amended the articles of

incorporation and constitution and by-laws of PS Foundation, after going through the tedious process of review and consensus building. The Philippines Securities and Exchange Commission approved the amended legal documents.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Our goal over the next three years is to develop the Danajon Bank as a model for ecosystem-based management because of its healthy marine habitats, equitable sustainable fisheries and good governance. We will help bring about following conditions:

- Coastal communities and fishing families on Danajon Bank have adjusted their dependence on marine resources to sustainable levels.
- Coastal communities have developed skills and capacities to participate in the effective management of marine resources on Danajon Bank.
- Resource managers (including stakeholders) are implementing fisheries and marine habitat management plans on Danajon Bank, using best practices and knowledge.
- National, provincial and local government authorities are implementing effective legislation and programs for marine resource management on Danajon Bank.
- The public is aware of and engaged in marine conservation issues, using Danajon Bank as a case study.

In 2007, we will scale up collaborations with local, regional, and national partners in assisting coastal communities improve the management of existing MPAs, especially those we helped establish during the last three years. We will assist four communities formulate new MPA management plans. We will continue extending technical support to MPA management councils as they further polish the management plans they formulated in 2006. Skills training will be a major focus of our interventions. Our approach will involve training workshops and cooperative learning exercises that will draw out best management practices and learning from a cross-section of mature, young, poorly-managed, and well-managed MPAs in Danajon.

We will strengthen our position to expand our knowledge about effectiveness of MPAs and how local seahorse populations respond to fishing pressures through implementation of long-term monitoring programs associated with MPAs and local seahorse populations. In the context of adaptive management, we will review the design of our MPA survey programs and use the results to refine these programs. Together with Project Seahorse International, we will explore new schemes of generating financial resources to help maintain our long-running MPA monitoring.

Once newly elected local officials shall have been installed in July, we will seek local government unit accreditation in municipalities where we have active conservation initiatives. We will brief newly elected chief executives and local legislators about our marine conservation initiatives in Danajon Bank.

Internally, we will organize skills upgrading and retooling for our field biologists and community organizers. We will also pursue our plan to apply for certification from the Philippine Council for NGO Certification.

PROJECT SEAHORSE FOUNDATION TEAM 2006

Edward Alivo	MPA Surveys Local Assistant
Rosemarie Apurado	Community Organizer
Silverio Augis	Local Community Organizer
Perfecto Auxilio	Community Organizer
Wilson Barbon	Senior Social Development Officer
Alfie Bartolo	Messenger-Utility
Pedro Bohol	MPA Surveys Local Assistant
Amado Blanco	National Director
Brian Cabrera	Supervising Biologist
Mia Therese Comeros	Local Research Assistant/MPA Surveys Volunteer
Robert Curttright	MPA Surveys International Volunteer (US)
Dondon Daan	MPA Surveys Local Assistant
Jesus Rey Dongallo	MPA Surveys Local Volunteer (Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro)
Fermina Genson	Field Biologist
Noel Harder	MPA Surveys International Volunteer (Canada)
Lourdes Labrada	Administrative and Finance Officer
Lieneke Marshall	MPA Surveys International Volunteer (Canada)
Diosdada Mejasco	Local Assistant
Stephanie Milne	MPA Surveys International Volunteer (Canada)
Ernesto Napalla	Local Assistant
Angelie Nellas	Field Biologist
Desiree Palana	Administrative Assistant
Hazel Panes	Field Biologist
Rogelio Pechoco	MPA Surveys Local Assistant
Jeremy Raynal	MPA Surveys International Volunteer (US Peace Corps-Ubay,Bohol)
Norah Saarman	MPA Surveys International Volunteer (US)
Geralde Sucano	Local Community Organizer



*Seated, from left (D Palana, W Barbon, P Auxilio, A Bartolo, B Cabrera, & A Blanco; Standing, from left (L Labrada, F Genson, H Panes, R Apurado, & A Nellas
Photo by PS Foundation*

OUR PARTNERS



FISHERIES
CENTRE

The University of British Columbia
Fisheries Centre, Vancouver, Canada
www.fisheries.ubc.ca



The Zoological Society of London, UK
www.zsl.org



The John G. Shedd Aquarium
Chicago, USA
www.shedd.org

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Whitley Fund for Nature

Conservation, Food, and Health Foundation, U.S.A

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BANGON	Bohol Alliance of NGOs
CFHF	Conservation, Food and Health Foundation
CITES	Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
DWCF	Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund
FISH Project	Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest Project
KAMADA	Kapunongan sa mga Mananagat sa Danajon (Alliance of Fishers in Danajon)
MIGS	Members in good standing
MPA	Marine protected area
NGO	Non-government organization
PMSM	Participatory Marine Sanctuary Monitoring
PS Foundation	Project Seahorse Foundation for Marine Conservation
PS-UBC	Project Seahorse-University of British Columbia
SETs	Sanctuary Enforcement Teams
UBC	The University of British Columbia



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