

A Review of National and Local Initiatives in Promoting, Implementing and Scaling Up ICM Practices in the Philippines in Implementation of EO 533

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The Philippine archipelago is made up of 7,107 islands occupying an area of 300,000 km². Its coastline extends to about 36,289 km. It is rich in diversity of marine resources. The “center of the center of marine shore fish diversity” is found in the Philippines. There are about 27,000 km² of coral reefs, 2,500 species of reef fishes, 168 species or 10% of cartilaginous fishes in the world, 25 species of marine mammals representing 3 orders, 5 species of marine turtles, 35 out of 54 species of mangroves in the world, 16 out of 60 species of sea grasses, 1,108 species of sea weeds – are found in the Philippines.

Eight hundred thirty-two of 1,541 or 54% of municipalities in the Philippines are in the coastal zone where 62% of the population also lives. More than 50% of animal protein intake in the Philippines is derived from marine fishes.

The marine and coastal environment has been under increasing pressure from the following: overexploitation or unsustainable fishing, use of destructive fishing practices, illegal fishing, aquarium and souvenir trade, diseases, invasive alien species, pollution, reclamation, conversion to fishponds, coastal development, and human pressure due to population. The consequences of these pressures, illegal and destructive practices are declining fisheries productivity, loss of marine biodiversity and degradation of the coastal resources and environment. Fish available for each Filipino may drop from 24 kilos to only 10 kilos per year in 2010 and what used to be 20 kilos catch per fisher daily in 1920 has gone down to an average of 2 kilos today for Filipino fishers. These losses and degradation translate into food security crises, increased poverty and susceptibility to calamities.

To reverse this trend, Integrated Coastal Management is adopted as the national strategy for the sustainable development of the Philippine coastal and marine areas through Executive Order 533,



signed on the 6th day of June 2006. The Executive Order is titled "Adopting 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" ICM is a coastal management system to regulate human behavior and preserve functional integrity of terrestrial and marine ecosystems for achieving sustainable development of the coastal areas. It adopts an integrative, holistic natural resource and environmental planning and management framework to balance competing and conflicting uses in a coastal area. It uses an interactive, multi-disciplinary, participatory, process-oriented program development and implementation approach. The details of how ICM is implemented in the Philippines are discussed in the paper.