

IOSEA QUESTIONNAIRE – 2011 *

NATIONAL NETWORKS / COMMITTEES FOR MARINE TURTLE CONSERVATION (Pursuant to Objective 6.4 of the IOSEA CMP)

Signatory State:

Philippines

IOSEA Focal Point (or name of person completing this form)

Renato D. Cruz

National network or Committee (give the name, if applicable):

At present there is no national committee but marine turtle activities are being undertaken through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

Brief Description / Status / Terms of Reference: (Is the network/committee formally designated by legislation, ministerial accord, MoU or some other administrative formality? Or is it an *ad hoc* organisation?)

The DENR which has a central office comprising of 8 line and staff Bureaus and 16 regional offices, is mandated to handle marine turtle conservation activities as provided by Republic Act No. 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation Protection Act of 2001. The Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), one of the bureaus of the DENR is the focal agency which recommends policy or guidelines in the implementation of marine turtle conservation activities and mangrove rehabilitation and conservation in the Philippines. Hence, marine turtle and mangrove conservation activities have been institutionalized within the DENR.

In addition, the DENR-PAWB encourages the DENR regional offices to establish formal agreements (MoAs or MoUs) among local stakeholders (regional DENR offices, other regional national governments, local governments, academe, enforcement agencies, local NGOs, local and coastal peoples organizations) to implement specific marine turtle conservation activities within their areas of jurisdiction. Aside from this, Executive Order No 899 was signed by the President in 2010, authorizing the formation of the Ad Hoc Committee for the implementation of the Philippine Action Plan on Enforcement of Environmental Law in identified Hotspots including Turtle Islands, Tawi-Tawi and Balabac, Palawan. The said EO explicitly orders the Philippine Coast Guard as the lead agency to implement the Philippine Action Plan (which has undergone a series of consultations among stakeholders) in both areas. Regular meetings are being done by the following members of the Ad Hoc Committee, namely: DENR-PAWB, Department of Foreign Affairs-Coastal Marine and Ocean Affairs, Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Philippine Maritime Group, Philippine Marines and Philippine Navy.

Lead agency / organisation / institution:

Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, DENR

Representation in the national network / committee (list all members):

▪ **Government agencies:**

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- **Academic and research organizations:**

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- **Environmental NGOs:**

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- **Development and human rights NGOs:**

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- **Fisheries sector:**

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- **Tourism sector:**

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- **Other private sector:**

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- **Others:**

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Specific resources for developing and maintaining the network / committee:

Present funds are provided from the National Appropriation Fund or GOP (National Government fund and local Governments fund), NGOs fund and private entities

Means of communication (e.g. meetings, conference calls, email etc.)

Exchange of communications between national governments is through letters and if urgent through email and phone facilities. Communications particularly with the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) is frequent since both Departments have a common jurisdiction in terms of coastal ecosystem or habitat. There are regular local meetings conducted with respect to existing international/regional bodies which have concerns on marine turtle conservation (Philippine-Malaysia Turtle Islands Heritage Protected Area, Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion and Coral Triangle Initiative).

Number of meetings / conference calls held each year:

- **2006:**
- **2007:**
- **2008:**
- **2009:**
- **2010:**
- **2011:**

Most important topics of discussion (past / current):

foreign poaching and illegal gathering/killing of endangered marine species, marine protected areas (capacity building) and network of MPAs

Most important advances and contributions resulting from the work of the network / committee:

apprehension and filing of cases by both DENR and DA-BFAR, identification of nesting beaches and foraging habitats, capability building

Most important challenges and difficulties encountered by network / committee:

overlapping of functions between/among the DENR, DA-BFAR and the Local Governments Units concerning coastal resource management.

Plans for the future functioning and development of the network / committee:

In 2006, Executive Order No. 533 was signed by the President declaring Integrated Coastal Management as the national strategy to the sustainable development of the country's coastal and marine resources. It mandated the DENR along with other agencies of government to develop a National Intergrated Coastal Management Program (NICMP) that shall foster participation, ecological integrity, improved quality of life and intergenerational equity in the management of the coastal wealth of the country.

The DENR as the lead agency has drafted a NICMP to be approved through a national consultation meeting. Part of the development of the NICMP are to review and provide recommendations on the following coastal concerns: (1) Environmental Hazards Management; (2) Live Reef/Food Fish Trade; (3) Foreshore Management; (4) Mangrove Management; (5) User Fees and Resource Rents; (6) Environmental and Social Impact Assessment; and (7) Human Resources and Capacity Building Needs of DENR, DA-BFAR and LGUs on Coastal Environmental Governance.

All these concerns are being pilot tested in 7 provinces throughout the Philippines. The development and implementation of the NICMP is a 7-year project (2007-2013) funded by UNEP and the Government of the Philippines.

If the NICMP is not enough to address specific issues and concerns related to marine turtle conservation, a National Committee for Marine Turtles and Marine Mammals might be established in the near future.

Other comments:

none

The information in this form was last updated: (*month / year*): 09/2011

*** PLEASE REFER TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONNAIRE (2008), AS APPROPRIATE**