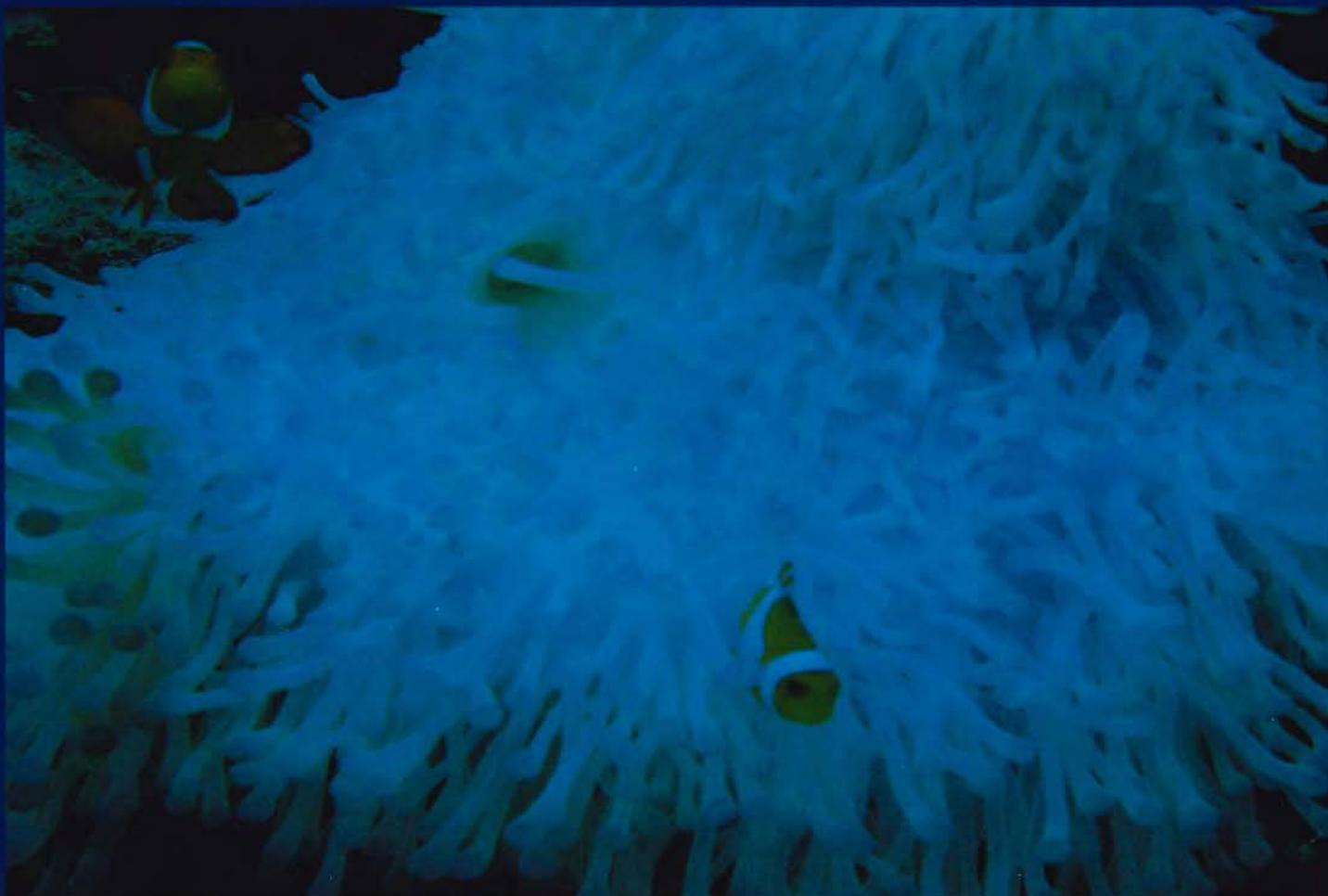


Rehabilitation and Conservation of Romblon Passage Marine Corridor through Integrated Community-Based Coastal Resource Management Approaches

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT



A document produced by the Sentro para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya, Inc. (SIKAT) for review of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of its Cooperative Agreement No. AID-492-A-11-00003

Cover photo: Clownfishes in Romblon Passage/SIKAT, Inc.

**Rehabilitation and Conservation of Romblon Passage
Marine Corridor through Integrated Community-Based
Coastal Resource Management Approaches**

Project Completion Report

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Submitted on:

August 16, 2013

Submitted for:

Cooperative Agreement No. AID-492-A-11-00003

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Period Covered: January 2011 – April 2013

The views and opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or of the United States Government.

About the Romblon Passage Program

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission for the Philippines awarded to *Sentro para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya, Inc.* (Center for the Development of Indigenous Science and Technology, Inc.) or SIKAT Cooperative Agreement No. AID-492-A-11-00003 to provide support for the “Rehabilitation and Conservation of Romblon Passage Marine Corridor through an Integrated Community-Based Coastal Resource Management Approaches” (hereinafter referred to as Romblon Passage Program) from January 2011 to January 2013, later extended to April 2013.

The project aims to rehabilitate and conserve the coastal and marine resources of Romblon Passage by engaging local coastal communities and pertinent stakeholders from four key municipalities of Romblon to participate in and eventually spearhead integrated community-based coastal resource management strategies and mechanisms. The main strategy was to persuade stakeholders participation through a top-down and bottom-up approach, where the local government units (LGUs) and relevant agencies were engaged to effect interest and change from the mandated authorities and the grassroots communities and organizations were encouraged to create a critical mass that championed and advocated for the management of the Passage and its natural resources especially those relating to the fisheries industry.

The partners of the Program were indispensably the three (3) Municipalities of Calatrava, San Agustin and Sta. Maria in the main Tablas Island on the western side of Romblon Passage and the Island Municipality of Romblon on the eastern side. The proximity between these two islands is close enough to make the whole of the Passage running between them as shared municipal waters of the four municipalities, a fact that made it vital and essential that the management of the waters of Romblon Passage be an integrated form of management implemented through an inter-LGU alliance and collaboration.

The Program likewise partnered with 28 local people’s organizations/fisherfolk associations of an aggregate membership of more than 1,100 individuals (51% female and 49% male) from 27 *barangays* (villages). Assistance and trainings were also provided to 8 more service areas that were very receptive and enthusiastic about the Program’s initiatives on resource management and the capacity building component among other things.

This Project Completion Report was prepared and submitted in fulfillment of the terms of Section A.5 of the Cooperative Agreement. It summarizes the specific objectives of the Program for the achievement of the overall goal and that of the declared intermediate results, and the activities that were undertaken to accomplish the objectives and desired outcomes and results. This Report shares the experience of the Program through its implementation and enumerates the key lessons learned from the experience. The measures taken in order to ensure that the gains and efforts are continued and sustained after the conclusion of the Program are likewise contained in this Report.

Acknowledgements

The implementation of the Romblon Passage Program would not have been possible without the help, support and encouragement of so many communities, organizations, groups, offices and individuals. Certainly, the successes and gains are as much the achievement of the collective efforts of these communities and individuals as they are of the Program. The experience surely would not have been more meaningful without their involvement in the Program.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Philippine Mission firmly guided the implementers from the award of the Cooperative Agreement to its conclusion. The support of the people at the Office of Energy, Environment and Climate Change as well as those at the Financial Management Services Division have been remarkable.

The four local chief executives of the partner municipalities, the Municipalities of Romblon, San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Calatrava, have provided their strong backing and explicit endorsement of the Program from the very beginning up to the end. Their respective local councils have championed and espoused the cause for resource management especially in the area of fisheries management. The Program also enjoyed the support and encouragement from the Provincial Governor as well as the Lone Representative to the Lower House of Congress.

The *barangay* (village) councils of the 27 *barangays* have all made efforts to promote the various resource management mechanisms and activities that the Program undertook. Numerous *barangay* resolutions and ordinances were filed and approved adopting such mechanisms as marine protected area and sea turtle management in the coastal resource management plans of the *barangays*.

The leaders and membership of the 28 people's organizations/fisherfolk associations, the 4 municipal fisherfolk federations/ alliances and the 3 mangrove management councils have made various and countless sacrifices in order to ensure that the activities of the Program were successfully conducted. They were the true driving force in the awareness and education campaign that made the general public take notice of what is and how can resource management be a potent strategy for addressing not only the environmental degradation of their surroundings but also for empowering communities to be able to take better control of their self-determination. The grassroots communities are the seldom recognized heroes of not just the Program but of the tangible accomplishments and the positive behavior change.

Other government agencies and groups that have focused and succeeded in deterring illegal activities within Romblon Passage deserve to be properly acknowledged. The Philippine National Police, its Maritime Group, the Philippine Coast Guard, the groups of fish wardens and wildlife enforcement officers and volunteer fisherfolk, representatives from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the Municipal Agriculture Office and the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils have all joined together to conduct regular sea patrolling of the Passage, devise an enforcement plan and conduct campaigns to inform and educate the public of prohibited acts that will result in apprehension and penalty. The group of small-scale commercial fishing operators also need to be acknowledged and commended for embracing the Program's plans and efforts to better manage and develop local fisheries.

The different national government agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, its Parks and Wildlife Bureau, the Department of Science and Technology, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Labor and Employment, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, National Anti-Poverty Commission and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources have in different ways provided both technical and financial support to various undertakings related to the Program's components and activities. Assistance in the livelihood projects of partner organizations, partnerships on specific management plans and guidance on available and possible opportunities for funding and technical cooperation have been but some of the help that these agencies have provided.

The various partnerships and networks that the Program were able to establish and nurture throughout the implementation period also need mentioning here for these afforded the Program and its partners vital information, technical assistance and moral support in the performance of many tasks. The U.S. Peace Corps volunteer to the Municipality of Romblon and Romblon State University (RSU) were very supportive in helping out in resource management activities like underwater survey assessments and mangrove reforestation while the Provincial Women's League of Romblon assisted many a conduct of the gender sensitivity trainings and violence against women and children orientations. Local dive shop operators have pledged to give SCUBA diving training and certification for free to future resource managers and have supported the management plans of the MPAs.

The Program wishes to recognize as well as the contributions of some networks like the NGOs for Fisheries Reform and the Philippine Locally-Managed Marine Area Network and its mother international network for providing venues for partner fisherfolk leaders to engaged in advocacies in fisheries management on the national stage.

The Program's resource persons from such groups like the Philippine Marine Mammal Stranding Network (PMMSN), the McKeough Marine Center of Xavier University and the Environmental Legal Assistance Center (ELAC) have contributed so much in establishing scientific and legal processes of collecting, analyzing and using data for resource management planning. The Program also acknowledges its contractors for some of the livelihood management trainings and actual livelihood project implementation, the capacity building trainings and the children's sea turtle activity book.

Finally, the Program would not have achieved the results it did if not for the dedication and commitment of the SIKAT staff, especially those directly involved in the conduct and facilitation of the activities on site. The patience, tirelessness and seemingly boundless energy that they brought into the Program very much reflected on the accomplishments and the resultant behavior change among the stakeholders after the two years, three months of program implementation.

To the coastal communities, fisherfolk, local advocates and supporters, not only of the many resource management activities but of the process and strategy to empower the grassroots level and engage the authorities at the LGU level for the institutionalization of integrated resource management mechanisms, the Program expresses its gratitude.

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List of Acronyms

ALS	Alternative Learning System
AOTR	Agreement Officer Technical Representative
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BIR	Bureau of Internal Revenue
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
BFARMC	<i>Barangay</i> Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council
Bgy.	<i>barangay</i> (village)
CASAMARRO	Calatrava-San Agustin-Sta. Maria-Romblon
CBCRM	community-based coastal resources management
CBNRM	community-based natural resources management
CBO	community-based organization
CI	Conservation International
CMFO	comprehensive municipal fishery ordinance
CODE-NGO	Caucus of Development NGO Networks
CRA	coastal resource assessment
CRM	coastal resources management
CSO	civil society organization
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DOST	Department of Science and Technology
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
ENRO	Environment and Natural Resources Officer
FARMC	Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council
FGD	focus group discussion
GIS	geographic information system
GPS	global positioning system
ICRM	integrated coastal resources management
ICRMP	Integrated Coastal Resources Management Project
IEC	information, education and communication
IFARMC	Integrated Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council
IR	intermediate result
IRA	internal revenue allotment
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Network
LIT	line intercept transect
LGC	Local Government Code (Republic Act No. 7160)
LGU	local government unit
LMMA	Locally-Managed Marine Area
LPRAT	Local Poverty Reduction Alleviation Team

MAO	Municipal Agriculture Office
MENRO	Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer
MFARMC	Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council
MIMAROPA	Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MPA	marine protected area
MSY	maximum sustainable yield
MTCAP	Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan
NAMRIA	National Mapping and Resource Information Authority
NAPC	National Anti-Poverty Commission
NFR	NGOs for Fisheries Reform
NGA	national government agency
NGO	non-government organization
NRM	natural resources management
OD	organizational development
PAWB	Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau
PBC	Philippine Biodiversity Conservation
PCG	Philippine Coast Guard
PENRO	Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office
PhiLMMA	Philippine Locally-Managed Marine Area
PMMSN	Philippine Marine Mammal Stranding Network
PNP	Philippine National Police
PO	people's organization
PWLR	Provincial Women's League of Romblon
RP-CLET	Romblon Pass Coastal Law Enforcement Team
RPP	Romblon Passage Program
RSU	Romblon State University
SCUBA	self-contained underwater breathing apparatus
SIKAT	<i>Sentro para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya, Inc.</i> (Center for the Development of Indigenous Science and Technology, Inc.)
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TRA	threat reduction assessment
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VAWC	violence against women and children
WEO	Wildlife Enforcement Officer

Executive Summary

Under Cooperative Agreement No. AID-492-A-11-00003 with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Philippine Mission, *Sentro para sa Ikaunlad ng Katutubong Agham at Teknolohiya, Inc.* (Center for the Development of Indigenous Science and Technology, Inc.) or SIKAT implemented the program “Rehabilitation and Conservation of Romblon Passage Marine Corridor through an Integrated Community-Based Coastal Resource Management Approaches” from January 2011 to April 2013.

Objectives and Strategies

The main goal of the Program was to rehabilitate and conserve the coastal and marine resources of Romblon Passage by engaging local coastal communities and pertinent stakeholders from four (4) partner municipalities in Romblon for effective integrated resource management, capacity building and empowerment of local communities, and the institutionalization and mainstreaming of resource management strategies and mechanisms in development plans, structures and policies. The Program’s objectives were as follows:

1. To rehabilitate marine habitats and restore ecological function to support marine biodiversity
2. To engage multisectoral groups in the protection and management of threatened/endangered marine species
3. To establish and maintain a local coastal resource management resource center
4. To organize and strengthen community-based organizations for Coastal Resource Management
5. To develop Romblon Passage Integrated Marine Corridor Management
6. To institutionalize Coastal Resource Management

The main strategy was to persuade stakeholders participation through a top-down and bottom-up approach, where the local government units (LGUs) and grassroots communities were engaged respectively to effect and be agents of change and promote the idea of resource management for rehabilitating and maintaining the health of the Passage that gives enormous and very valuable benefits, especially for fisheries, to the local populace.

A major institutional structure/arrangement was needed for the desired integrated resource management mechanism. The Program facilitated the creation and formalization of an inter-LGU alliance for the shared and coordinated responsibility over the utilization, protection, rehabilitation, development and management of Romblon Passage which took the form of an integrated fisheries and aquatic resources management council (IFARMC) as prescribed by the Fisheries Code for bodies of water bounded by two (2) or more municipalities. The Calatrava-San Agustin-Sta. Maria-Romblon (CASAMARRO) IFARMC was officially established in November 2011.

The central thrust for the grassroots movement was to increase and enhance the capacities of the local communities and organizations through trainings and mentoring so that they could ably act as advocates as well as create a critical mass to buttress the call for natural resource management of the Passage.

Achievement of Targets

In terms of coverage, the Program was involved in 27 *barangays* (villages) in four (4) municipalities with an additional eight (8) *barangays* as service areas. Essentially, the Program was in 16 out of the total 31 *barangays* in Romblon, 9 of the 15 in San Agustin, 5 of the 6 *barangays* in Sta. Maria, and 5 out of 7 *barangays* in Calatrava.

The Program performed better than 95% on all its deliverable items as listed in the proposed work plan. The Program's shortcomings in three (3) items (number of deputized new fish wardens, number of representatives that participated in the law enforcement forum and number of giant clams restocked in MPA sites) were reasonable deficiencies given that the factors which caused the results to fall short of the target "numbers" were out of the Program's control. However, it is in item "number of direct household beneficiaries with increased income as a result of the supplementary livelihood projects/business enterprises provided" that the Program was unable to meet its planned target (174 out of 200) even as the number of planned livelihood projects of 10 was delivered.

On the other hand, the Program exceeded the targets on thirty (30) items or on more than 50% of all the listed deliverable items. For intermediate result (IR) 1 of *Improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems*, 18 marine protected areas (MPAs) covering 229 hectares were maintained along with 10.66 hectares of mangrove areas reforested and 55.23 hectares of old-growth mangrove forests conserved and managed. Seven (7) multi-species mangrove nurseries, five (5) more than the target of two (2), were put up under the Program that catered to 67,212 mangrove propagules/seedlings. For IR 2 of *Empowered communities spearheading integrated resource management*, twenty-two (22) local communities have integrated a sea/marine turtle management plan into their community resource management plans while fifteen (15) have adopted the two-year giant clams management plan created in a giant clams management training and workshop. The Program have partnered with and assisted twenty-eight (28) local people's organizations/fisherfolk associations with total membership of more than 1,100 individuals where 51% are females. They have mostly been the recipient of the various capacity building activities that the Program conducted. In the *Institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms* of IR 3, the CASAMARRO IFARMC, together with the reactivated MFARMCs of the 4 partner municipalities, embody the major institutionalization that the Program has accomplished. The respective amended comprehensive municipal fisheries ordinances (CMFOs) of the municipalities also serve as institutional measures for the integration of resource management into local policies.

Through the eight (8) performance indicators, the achievement of the Program was 100% or better except for performance indicator no. 3 that pertained to the number of people with increased economic benefits. As has been stated above, only 174 out of the target 200 was delivered by the Program in the ten livelihood projects it supported.

Lessons from the Program Experience

Organizing played a major and crucial role in this Program that aimed to achieve its goals through the participation and empowerment of local organizations and individuals. There were also specific tracks for initializing the engagement with the authorities/LGUs and for gaining the support of local communities and the public in general and both were simultaneously undertaken through a top-down and bottom-up approach.

In connection with a strong organizing component, various capacity building activities were undertaken to build up the knowledge and skills of partner organizations both at the LGU level and at the grassroots level. Linking these stakeholders to other networks through partnerships also provided them helpful insights on how things are done by other stakeholders in other areas/regions. The sharing and exchange of ideas and experiences provided both technical and moral support that is much needed in circumstances when the capacities were still limited and at a stage where close guidance was necessary. A focus on gender responsive training designs helped a lot in tapping the unique skill sets of the women. This paved the way for the Program to be accepted more because of the inclusive nature and way of empowering communities.

In the conduct of information gathering and data analysis, it is best to employ proven scientific methods and models whenever appropriate to establish integrity and credibility to the process. By using science to support the data, the planning, decision making and awareness campaign had more credence and were more acceptable to stakeholders. These scientific processes and techniques were transferred to local technical staff at the LGU as well as to selected key members of the communities and leaders of fisherfolk organizations as a way to sustain the monitoring and evaluation activities started by the Program such as the underwater survey assessments, mangrove assessments and the sea patrolling activities.

The institutionalization of resource management mechanisms is a must if the successes of the Program were to continue. The identification of champions and advocates helped a lot in the groundworking to establish the CASAMARRO IFARMC. These individuals facilitated much of the lobby work necessary to ensure that the creation of the IFARMC was on the agenda of the local councils and in various local development bodies. Together with community leaders mentored to engage in lobbying and campaign, the champions succeeded in bringing the discussions about resource management further and forward. This point also illustrates that it is a must to engage and work with the local government units for they can make the attainment of certain desired outcomes easier and faster with the resources they have at their disposal and the mandate they enjoy as the legal authority.

Next Steps

While the Program is considered a huge success, there are several items that should be given particular attention to to ensure that the gains last and persist. One is the conduct of resource valuation in order to characterize more definitively the benefits derived from the resources of Romblon Passage in financial terms. The computation of the maximum sustainable yield of the Passage would also be very ideal. A sensible zoning of the coastal zone should also be accomplished soon in light of the increased construction and development of beach resorts and water sports/adventure shops. Both the authorizing bodies and the local communities must also be capacitated on the idea/concept and models of ecotourism to prepare them to tackle environmental issues that may spring up from the local tourism developments and activities.

In terms of the local institutionalization of resource management, LGUs should muster the political will to establish their own environment and natural resources officer as a permanent fixture in the LGU. The Municipal Agriculture Office should also ensure that there is at least one fisheries graduate individual in its staff to serve as the focal person for all the fisheries-related concerns and marine resources management issues.

I. Objectives of the Cooperative Agreement

I.1. Background

Romblon Passage lies at the center of the Philippine archipelago. It is a critical ecosystem that connects the major fishing grounds of the Visayan Sea and the Verde Island Passage. The islands and islets of Romblon and Tablas that border the Passage provide sanctuary for both migratory and demersal marine species. The Passage is an important corridor for migratory species including large population of economically important marine species such as yellow fin, skipjack and big-eye tuna. The Passage also harbors threatened and endangered species such as sea turtles, dolphins, giant clams, stingrays, whale sharks and other commercially important marine resources. There have also been sightings of sea cows (*dugong*) in various seagrass areas of the Passage. Major marine ecosystems include coral, seagrass and mangrove ecosystems.

The biodiversity of Romblon Passage earned recognition among conservation NGOs and has been included as part of the Sulu-Sulawesi Ecoregion. Conservation International (CI) includes the Passage as part of the Verde Island Passage, believed to be the center of global marine biodiversity, while the Philippine Biodiversity Conservation, in its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, identified the Passage as a very high priority for marine areas of biological significance.

Yet the coastal and marine resources of Romblon Passage have been subjected to various natural and anthropogenic stresses which have resulted in the degradation of inter-related ecosystems and increasing poverty incidence among the fisher-households. These threaten the integrity of various ecological functions vital to marine biodiversity conservation and protection and the healthy balance of ecosystems that provide local communities sources of food and livelihood. Threats such as the impact of climate change, overfishing, intrusion of commercial fishers in municipal waters, siltation, and high fishing pressure due to limited livelihood opportunities in the islands put in danger the Passage's biodiversity and natural life support systems.

The Province of Romblon is one of the top 20 most impoverished provinces in the country. Its average Family Annual Income of PhP73,396.00 and average Family Annual Expenditures of PhP54,698.00 are the lowest in the Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan (MIMAROPA) region or Region IV-B¹ in 2000. The local Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) and the Peace and Equity Foundation meanwhile consider the province as one of the twenty-eight (28) poorest provinces out of eighty (80) in the Philippines today. Poverty statistics from 2000 also indicate that there were 40,351 families in Romblon whose annual per capita income falls below the poverty threshold². As the poverty incidence increases in the province, so does the burden that the marine and coastal ecosystems absorb as the result of the increase in fishing pressure and in dependence on natural resources.

Most of the economic activities in the identified four (4) partner municipalities of Romblon, San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Calatrava are resource-based. The marble industry used to be a major

¹ National Statistics Office, 2000.

² National Statistical Coordination Board, Poverty Statistics 2000.

contributor to the local economy, particularly for the Municipality of Romblon, prior to the decline of market demand in the 1990s due to the emergence of cheaper and lighter ceramic tiles. For a municipality like Romblon where there are only two (2) major industries namely marble and fisheries, this has resulted to even more increased fishing pressure due to the limited opportunities for livelihood. In Tablas Island where the three municipalities are situated, the agriculture industry is still underdeveloped such that fisheries is also the default employer and natural resources are the primary provider of basic necessities.

Unfortunately, the fisheries sector also seems to be on a decline. In 2003, the total fish production decreased by 3.17% with the total catch of 6,603 metric tons from the approximately 646,808 hectares municipal waters³. Fish production of marginal municipal fishers went down by 6.5% in that same year⁴. The rapid growth of the population and increase in fishing activities for the last several decades have seriously depleted the province's marine resources. Based on the World Bank report in 2005, Romblon Passage is a heavily exploited fishing area with 2-70 fishers/km⁵. Estimates indicate that the fish catch of fishers has been reduced to a critical level in the last two decades. This placed the Passage under the priority marine and coastal conservation area⁶. With the declining fish catch, this puts in peril Romblon Passage's role as a major contributor to the total fish production of the province.

Coastal communities are dependent more so on marine resources as source of food and livelihood. The local coastal towns likewise become highly dependent on the surrounding natural resources to supply local food demand during the monsoon season. Romblon is approximately 187 nautical miles (169 air miles) from Metro Manila and during the monsoon and typhoon season, sea transport is not viable for food and supplies delivery to come in from outside the province. In these instances when the province is cut off from regular trading with neighboring provinces that often last for 5-7 days, the local population of the province looks to the local fisheries sector to make available marine food products for its food requirements.

Both coastal dwellers and marine resources are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In 2008, typhoon Frank (international name Fengshen) ravaged the coral reefs of the Municipality of Romblon and displaced 7,021 households. The increasing incidences of typhoons in the province and the seemingly new weather pattern certainly affected fishing activities. The traditional fishing calendar somehow is not anymore applicable.

While there can only be so much that can be done to protect and prepare for undesirable environmental and social circumstances brought about by natural phenomena, the anthropogenic causes of the same dire circumstances can and must be addressed more sensibly. Mangrove forests/areas can be protected from further conversion and destruction, and be reforested. The health of the seagrass beds and coral reefs on the other hand may be guarded against siltation and unsustainable fishing practices such as compressor diving and the use of active fishing gears.

The Passage, despite the less-than-desirable state it is in, still is a significant body of water

³ National Statistical Coordination Board, NSCB Fact Sheet, Romblon Special Edition.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The World Bank Group, Philippine Environment Monitor 2005.

⁶ Ibid.

providing a migratory path for threatened species and pelagic fishes. Whale sharks are observed during the months of November to January. There are also three (3) species of marine or sea turtles that regularly visit Romblon Passage; the Green Sea Turtle⁷, the Hawksbill Turtle⁸ and the Olive Ridley Turtle⁹. The nesting areas of these sea turtles are distributed along the coastline of the Passage. Giant clams are also found in the Passage's inlets and bays. Dolphins have been observed to frequent the Passage especially just before the typhoon season when the waters are still and calm. And beginning 2008, there again have been fishers reporting sightings of sea cow or *dugong*.

The level of fish catch is apparently still profitable enough that it is still attractive to commercial fishing operations. So much so that one major problem within the Passage has been the intrusion of small-scale and large-scale commercial fishers. From 2005 to June 2010 in the Municipality of Romblon, 357 illegal fishers and commercial fishers have been apprehended by local fish wardens and volunteer members of fisherfolk people's organizations. In 2008, more than 100 dolphins were rescued by fishers from purse seine operators. These figures are indicative of the rampant intrusion and illegal operations of commercial fishers within Romblon Passage. However, the local government units (LGUs) and fishers of the other three (3) municipalities do not yet have the capacity to go after illegal and commercial fishers in their respective municipal waters that are part of the Passage.

Of the four (4) partner municipalities, it is only the Municipality of Romblon that has an existing Comprehensive Municipal Fisheries Ordinance (CMFO) as of 2010 that complies with the 1998 Fisheries Code of the Philippines. The Municipality of Sta. Maria is even using Presidential Decree 704 as basis, albeit an outdated one, for its fisheries ordinances. The lack of initiative of the LGUs to update their respective fisheries ordinances have caused much confusion among the resource users and increased the resource use conflict among the different stakeholders. Commercial fishers are using the current ordinances to simplistically justify their fishing operation anywhere inside municipal waters of 7 fathoms deep when the Fisheries Code specifically states that commercial fishing operations may allowed by the LGU only in areas within the 10.1 to 15 kilometers of the municipal waters that are 7 fathoms deep.

Aside from the fisheries ordinance, the local fisheries industry and coastal development plans should be integrated in the overall LGU development plan. This will ensure that social and environmental concerns will be given priority in the drafting of the local government development agenda. The status of the marine environment of Romblon Passage reflects the current capacity of the LGUs and organized communities and fisherfolk not only in managing their marine resources but also in establishing and mainstreaming institutionalized mechanisms that will address the issues plaguing the condition of their natural resources. The development of other industries and areas will help decrease the burden that is borne by the Passage particularly as the source of food, raw materials and livelihood. The conservation and rehabilitation of Romblon Passage's ecosystems is an urgent undertaking to ensure that the benefits and the natural provisions obtained from the Passage continue and flourish especially for the sake of the marginalized fisherfolk who have the highest dependence on the former's resources.

⁷ IUCN Redlist Category is Endangered.

⁸ IUCN Redlist Category is Critically Endangered.

⁹ IUCN Redlist Category is Vulnerable.

I.2. Program Overview

Continuing with its mission of organizing and strengthening organizations that will empower families and communities to manage their natural resources, SIKAT brought its community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) program to the Municipality of Romblon in 2004 aiming to replicate the program and service it has rendered for the Province of Zambales. It has since then been instrumental in the reactivation of fourteen (14) marine protected areas (MPAs) in the island municipality along with the release of 449 sea turtle hatchlings back into the wild, the rescue of 100 dolphins from commercial fishers and the restocking of 153 giant clams in protected areas. This level of success, all done in collaboration with community-based organizations, demonstrates the effectiveness of tapping the strengths of fisherfolk associations and people's organizations as the catalyst of change and reform in introducing, maintaining and sustaining environmental and social interventions.

The same strategy and approach is now going to be employed as a response to the critical environmental and social issues related to fisheries management being experienced by the Province of Romblon today. Particularly, the four (4) municipalities bordering Romblon Passage namely the Municipalities of Romblon, San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Calatrava, will be the focal partners in setting up an integrated management system for the Passage. While SIKAT has previously established its presence in the first three (3) municipalities doing primarily grassroots organizing and is now including the Municipality of Calatrava as a new partner, the USAID-funded "Rehabilitation and Conservation of Romblon Passage Marine Corridor through an Integrated Community-Based Coastal Resource Management Approaches" (hereinafter referred to as Romblon Passage Program) will now forge an inter-LGU alliance for the shared responsibility and management of Romblon Passage and this will be one of the most significant undertaking of the Program.

Romblon Passage is bounded by the Municipalities of Calatrava, San Agustin and Sta. Maria in the main Tablas Island on the north-western side and by the Island of Romblon on the eastern side. The proximity between these two major islands is close enough to make the whole of the Passage running between them as shared municipal waters of these four municipalities. This fact makes it vital and essential that the management of the waters of Romblon Passage be an integrated form of management. Calatrava is crucial as a new partner because it alone borders the north ingress/egress of the Passage.

Within the context of the integrated form of management, acknowledgement and recognition of the fisherfolk and coastal dwellers, as primary stakeholders of the marine and coastal environment, as effective advocates of natural resources management (NRM) is maintained. The grassroots and community-based organization partners will serve as proponents in establishing and nurturing partnerships with other concerned groups particularly the LGUs, national government agencies (NGAs), non-government organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), and other private sector groups that will promote, support and collaborate on an integrated coastal resource management (ICRM) and other appropriate natural resources management mechanisms (i.e. Mangrove Area management, MPA management, Management of Sea turtle Nesting Area, etc.) that will be set up within and/or in support of the integrated management framework of the Passage.

Recognizing the capacities of the LGUs of these four municipalities and that of people's organizations and fisherfolk associations, together with the delicate status of the Passage's marine and coastal ecosystems, the strategy of engaging the various stakeholders, especially the community-based organizations and coastal communities that have the biggest stake and dependence on such resources, will be the major cornerstone in the implementation of the Romblon Passage Program.

1.2.1. Results Framework

The overall goal of the Romblon Passage Program is to rehabilitate and conserve the coastal and marine resources of Romblon Passage through integrated community-based coastal resource management strategies and mechanisms. Figure 1 illustrates the Program's Results Framework.

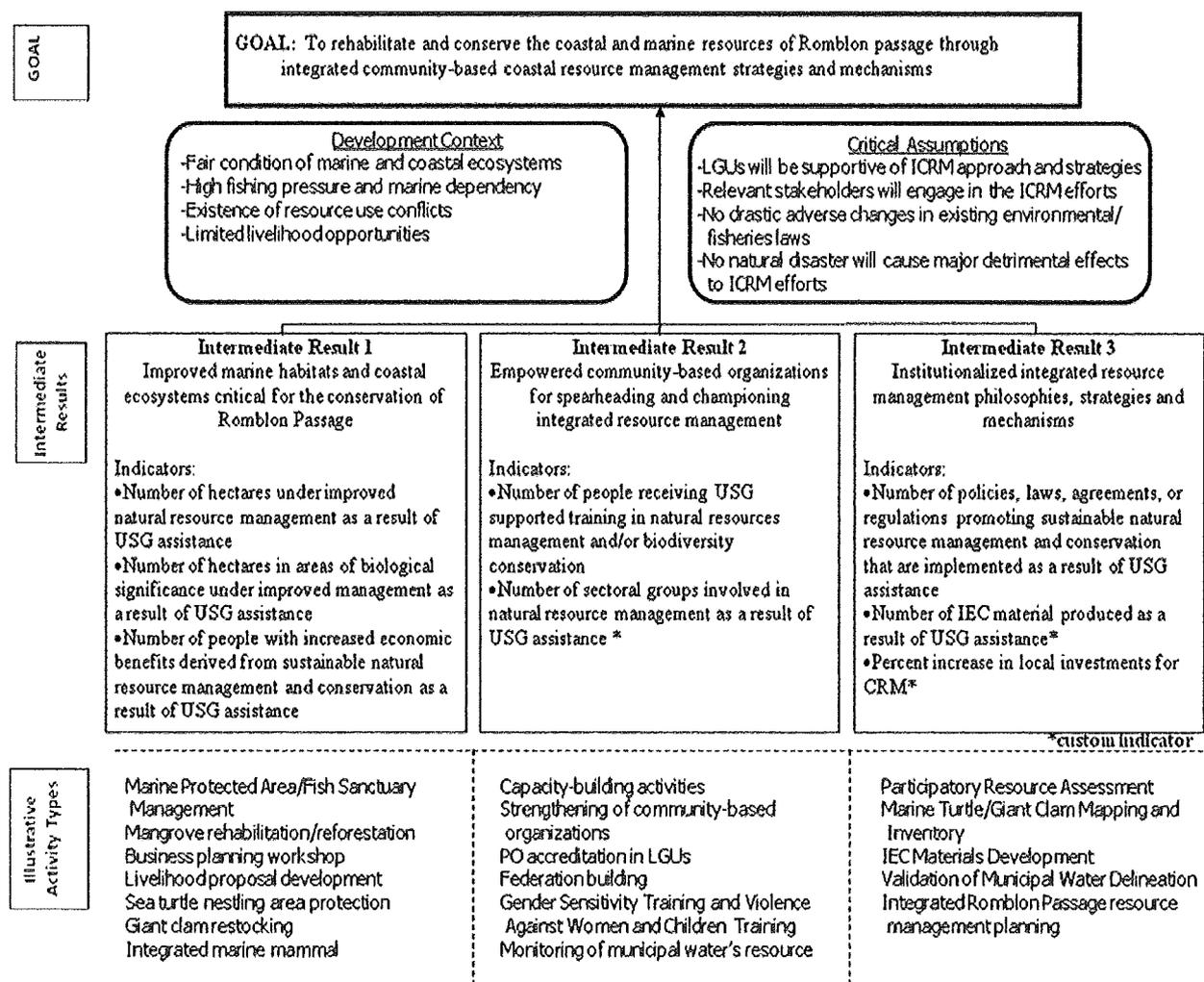


Figure 1. Results Framework for the “Rehabilitation and Conservation of Romblon Passage Marine Corridor through Integrated Community-Based Coastal Resource Management Approaches”

The attainment of the stated goal is premised on the achievement of three (3) intermediate results (IRs):

- IR 1. Improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems critical for the conservation of Romblon Passage
- IR 2. Empowered community-based organizations for spearheading and championing integrated resource management
- IR 3. Institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms

The IRs, as well as the indicators and illustrative activity types for the Program, are likewise reflected in the Results Framework.

The Program is designed to achieve the abovementioned intermediate results by addressing the limited, if at all existing, concerted actions among the different stakeholders of Romblon Passage. The aim is to synergize the various interventions of the resource managers in the four (4) municipalities with special attention to the nature and character of each stakeholder's inherent role with respect to the Passage (the LGU as policymakers, regulators and law enforcers, the artisanal/municipal and small-scale fishers as users and caretakers, the people's organizations as advocates for resource management, etc.) towards the conservation and sustainable utilization of its marine and coastal resources.

In two years of implementation, the Program will have improved the management of 150, 131 hectares of corresponding municipal waters of the four (4) partner municipalities or 23.21% of the aggregate 646,808 hectares municipal waters of all the municipalities in the Province of Romblon. In adhering to the central strategy of integrated community-based coastal resource management by engaging coastal communities and relevant stakeholders from the four municipalities to attain its goal, the Program will work with twenty-five (25) communities from the four municipalities directly using resources from Romblon Passage and have them engaged in community-based coastal/natural resource management. This represents a large part of the constituency building that will play a major role in and lend the vital support to the other strategies that will be employed such as the establishment and maintenance of resource management mechanisms to increase resilience of marine ecosystems to the impact of climate change, the development of an integrated resource management plan for Romblon Passage, the mainstreaming of natural resources management in the proposal, discussions and actuation of local development plans and policies, and the provision of alternative livelihood enterprises to help lessen the fishing pressure and dependence on natural resources among others. It perfectly complements the strategic approach for the same environmental cause through the local government unit track.

I.2.2. Program Sites

Romblon Passage is a vital marine corridor found at the center of the Philippine archipelago that links the major fishing grounds of the Visayan Sea and Verde Island Passage (see Figure 2). The Passage is bounded by the long island of Tablas on the western side and by the island of Romblon on the eastern side. The focus of Romblon Passage Program's interventions will be on the contiguous municipalities of Calatrava, San Agustin and Sta. Maria along Tablas Island facing

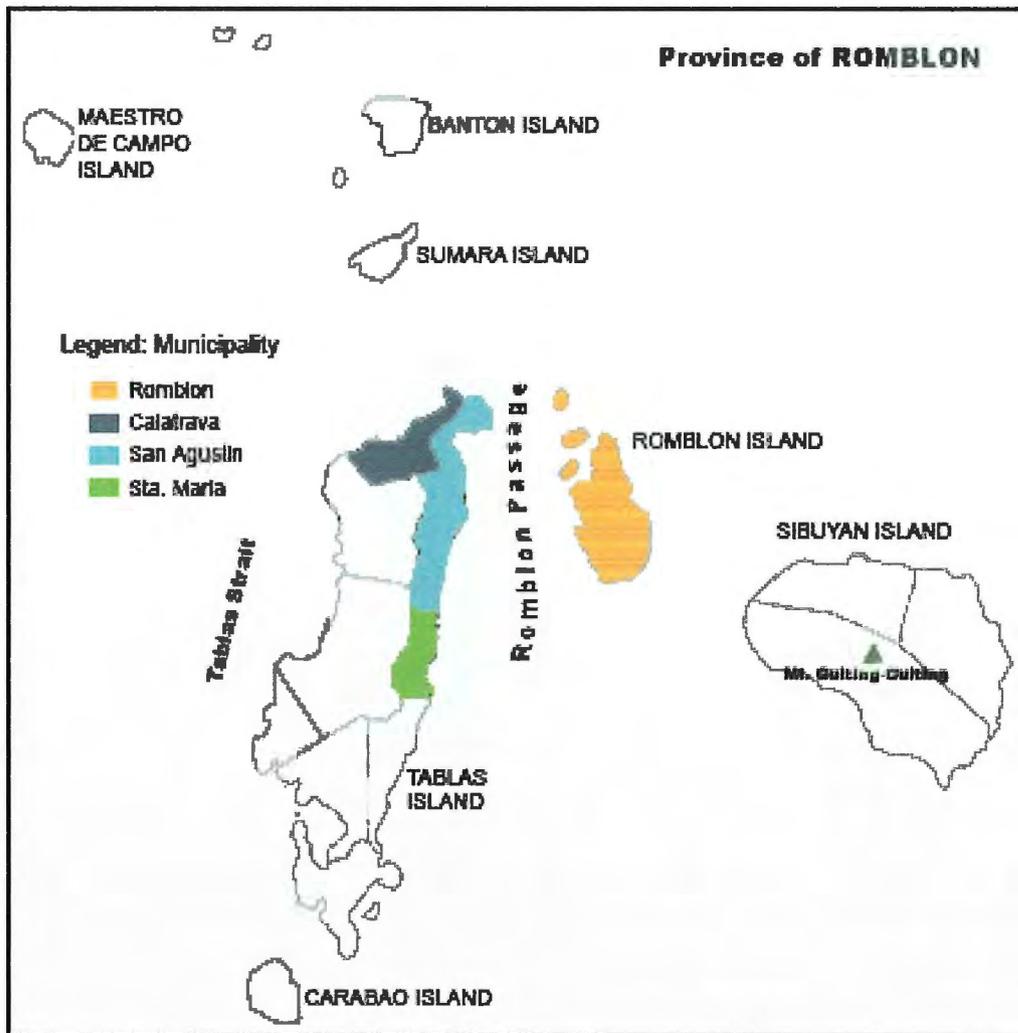
the Passage and the lone Municipality of Romblon which is the namesake of the island across the Passage, as shown in Figure 3.



(Source: Modified from <http://www.cebuvatch.com/maps.html>)

Figure 2. Romblon Site Location

The distance between the islands of Tablas and Romblon is less than thirty (30) kilometers, hence the entire Romblon Passage is for the exclusive use of artisanal/municipal fishers. Republic Act 8550 or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 prohibits commercial fishers and fishing vessels, generally defined as those weighing more than three (3) gross tons, inside municipal waters. The municipal waters of the four municipalities are approximately 150, 131 hectares.



(Source: Modified from http://www.thefullwiki.org/Romblon,_Romblon)

Figure 3. Program Site Location

The Passage is characterized by inlets and bays that protect diverse species of coral reefs, mangroves, seagrasses and marine fishes and organisms. Romblon Passage is also a migratory path of threatened and endangered species such as whale sharks, marine/sea turtles, dolphins and even sea cows. The presence of pelagic fishes and numerous commercially viable fish products make the Passage an attractive fishing ground that unfortunately have resulted to heightened resource use competition among the municipal fishers, small-scale commercial fishers and large-scale commercial fishers. As of 2010, there are 6,736 registered municipal fishers operating within the Romblon Passage.

I.3. Objectives, Targets, Components, and Strategies

It is stated by the Fisheries Code that the municipality/city government have jurisdiction over municipal waters and that the same, in consultation with the fisheries and aquatic resources management council (FARMC), is responsible for the management, conservation, development, protection, utilization, and disposition of all fish and fishery/aquatic resources within said municipal waters¹⁰. While this has been clear for the past fifteen (15) years since that law's enactment, the observance of this particular provision of the Code has been generally questionable.

In aiming for the goal of rehabilitating and conserving the coastal and marine resources of Romblon Passage through integrated community-based coastal resource management strategies and mechanisms by engaging the coastal communities and other stakeholders from the four partner municipalities, the Romblon Passage Program looks to assert the provisions of the law as it pertains to the management of municipal waters. More specifically, the Program shall seek for the creation of an integrated fisheries and aquatic resources management council (IFARMC), as prescribed by the Code in bodies of water bounded by two (2) or more municipalities/cities¹¹, among the four partner municipalities that will serve as both catalyst and representation of the inter-LGU efforts for an integrated management of the Passage. Simultaneously, the Program shall organize, capacitate and engage fisherfolk and community-based/grassroots organizations that will serve as responsible stewards of the natural resources in the Passage and from whence at least nine (9) representatives of the fisherfolk sector (including those from the youth and women sectors) to the composition of the IFARMC would come. This “top-down and bottom-up” approach ensures maximum stakeholder participation and uniformity of purpose.

I.3.1. Objectives and Targets

In the context of the strategic approach of engaging the LGUs, the coastal communities and pertinent stakeholders from the four partner municipalities for effective integrated resource management, the capacity-building and empowerment of local communities/organizations, and the institutionalization and mainstreaming of resource management mechanisms in development plans, structures and policies, Romblon Passage Program shall work for the achievement of (IR1) improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems critical for the conservation of Romblon Passage, (IR2) empowered community-based organizations for spearheading and championing integrated resource management, and (IR3) institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms.

In order to realize these three (3) intermediate results (IRs), the Program shall work for six (6) specific objectives that shall, at the same time, contribute to the attainment of the group of eight (8) target indicators set as primary performance measure. The latter is comprised of five (5) USAID standard indicators and three (3) custom indicators identified by SIKAT.

¹⁰ Chapter 2, Article 1, Section 16 of the 1998 Philippine Fisheries Code.

¹¹ Chapter 3, Article 2, Section 76 of the 1998 Philippine Fisheries Code.

The USG set of common indicators for Natural Resources and Biodiversity to measure program progress:

Common USAID Indicators to Measure Program Progress

1. Number of hectares under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance.
2. Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance.
3. Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance.
4. Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation.
5. Number of policies, laws, agreements or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance.

The three (3) custom indicators established by SIKAT which will provide additional management information and measure of progress:

Custom SIKAT Indicators to Measure Program Progress

6. Number of sectoral groups involved in natural resource management as a result of USG assistance.
7. Number of IEC materials produced as a result of USG assistance.
8. Percent increase in local investments for CRM.

Indicator 1 pertains to the number of hectares that will have improved natural resource management by the end of the two year program. This improved management refers to meeting established natural resource management benchmarks for management effectiveness and the unit of measure shall be the areas (hectares) of “combined municipal waters” comprised of the municipal waters of the four (4) partner municipalities along and across Romblon Passage measured using the legal definition of marine waters 0 to 15 kilometers from the coastline, and coastal and marine resource areas but excluding Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nesting areas that may be under other fishery management jurisdictions and/or resource management bodies/units that are counted in Indicator 2.

Accordingly, Indicator 2 relates to areas of biological significance that meets established natural resource management benchmarks for management effectiveness such as those conforming to accepted standards or protocols which may include a management body/unit established and functional, boundaries demarcated and enforcement in place, a monitoring and evaluation system in place, and other appropriate measures. For the Romblon Passage Program, areas (hectares) of “biological significance” refer to Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries or marine area/s with a strong likelihood of being designated as an MPA by 2013, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nesting areas. These areas are within key biodiversity areas which were identified through participatory eco-regional, national and local assessments.

Indicator 3, “the number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource and conservation as a result of USG assistance Economic Benefits”, refer to the total number of individuals who receive economic benefits and revenues arising from new and/or expansion of community-based livelihood projects/enterprises or activities that are strategically planned and created leading to livelihood diversification. Ultimately, the expectation is that this shall lessen the pressure on the natural resources along and across Romblon Passage. Increasing the economic benefits to local fishers of Romblon Passage through development of supplemental livelihood enterprises is an essential aspect of many USAID programs because they enable support for the natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation actions and initiatives of the Program.

Indicator 4 meanwhile is the number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation. Under the Program, these will be individuals participating in learning activities intended for teaching or imparting knowledge and information on natural resources management and biodiversity conservation with designated instructors, mentors or lead persons, learning objectives, and outcomes, conducted fulltime or intermittently. This includes formal and non-formal training activities, and consists of transfer of knowledge, skills or attitudes through structured learning and follow-up activities, or through less structured means to solve problems or fill identified performance gaps.

For Indicator 5, what will be monitored and accounted are the number of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance. These shall include those crafted and formally endorsed by government, non-government, civil society, and/or private sector stakeholders with the intent to strengthen sustainable natural resource management including policies and agreements between and among municipalities and the province for the purpose of co-management of coastal and marine resources. The formal and informal institutional structures in the form of policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements are essential aspects of many USAID programs because they provide the enabling environment and sustaining measures on which actions are built and maintained.

The number of sectoral groups involved in natural resource management as a result of USG assistance is Indicator 6 and the first of three custom indicators set by SIKAT to help measure the progress of the Program. The groups referred, but not limited, to by this indicator include non-government, civil society, and people’s organizations as well as youth organizations, schools and learning institutions, and/or private sector stakeholders regularly participating in NRM and biodiversity conservation activities. Indicator 6 exhibits a qualitative aspect to the quantitative number being measured in presenting the extent of participation even of groups not necessarily directly involved with the Program.

Indicator 7, another custom indicator, pertains to information, education and communication (IEC) materials produced by the Program and include posters, billboard signage, primers, and children’s workbooks developed and distributed to raise awareness and gather general public support for the rehabilitation and management of Romblon Passage. These IEC materials will focus on the promotion of mangrove, sea turtle, and marine mammal protection and conservation. Constituency building and raising public awareness are critical aspects of the

Program as these solicit support for natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation actions as well as highlight the resources, initiatives, and results of the Program.

The last indicator of the Program, Indicator 8, is the percent increase in local investments for coastal resource management. The term “local investments” here refers to any cash or in-kind contributions by both public (i.e. local government units and agencies) and private sectors (i.e. business organization and chambers of commerce, civil society organizations) operating locally to activities intended to strengthen sustainable natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation. An increase in local investments for coastal resource management is a direct measure of support for natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation which is the principal reason that the Program is adopting this custom indicator. It measures leveraging of public and private resources to improved and sustained resource management efforts.

Linkages

Objectives 1 and 2 developed by Romblon Passage Program shall account for IR 1 and at the same time corresponds to target indicators 1, 2 and 3. However, Objectives 3, 5 and 6 are also crucial to achieving IR 1 and largely contribute to meeting target indicators 1 and 2. Objective 4 meanwhile relates chiefly with IR 2 and target indicators 4 and 6 just as this Objective’s component of technical assistance and capacity building support to strengthen LGUs’ law enforcement likewise contributes o IR 3. More purposely though, Objectives 3, 5 and 6 combine to effect IR 3 and the corresponding target indicators 5, 7 and 8 for this particular intermediate result.

<p style="text-align: center;">Intermediate Result 1 Improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems critical for the conservation of Romblon Passage</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of hectares under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance 2. Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance 3. Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance 	<p style="text-align: center;">Intermediate Result 2 Empowered community-based organizations for spearheading and championing integrated resource management</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation 6. Number of sectoral groups involved in natural resource management as a result of USG assistance * 	<p style="text-align: center;">Intermediate Result 3 Institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Number of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance 7. Number of IEC material produced as a result of USG assistance* 8. Percent increase in local investments for CRM*
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Target indicators marked with * are custom indicators.

<p>BY OBJECTIVES</p>	<p><u>Obj. 1</u> To rehabilitate marine habitat and restore its ecological functions that could support the marine biodiversity of Romblon Passage by implementing diverse resource management strategies and mechanisms.</p> <p><u>Obj. 2</u> To engage multi-sectoral groups in the protection and management of threatened and endangered marine species in Romblon Passage.</p>	<p><u>Obj. 4</u> To organize & strengthen community-based organizations towards improving their participation in environmental governance and enhancement of their coastal resource management practices.</p>	<p><u>Obj. 3</u> To establish and maintain a local resource mgt. center that would enhance the resource mgt. practices of local partners and stakeholders</p> <p><u>Obj. 5</u> To develop Romblon Passage integrated marine corridor management & synergize mgt. and enforcement efforts of the four municipalities.</p> <p><u>Obj. 6</u> To institutionalize coastal resource management in the development of plans and policies.</p>
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I.3.2. Program Components and Key Activities

The six (6) objectives of the Program shall be embodied in seven (7) components that are each, in turn, to deliver their eponymous outcomes. In breaking down the accomplishment of the objectives into program components, the planning, management and monitoring of progress is facilitated more effectively. At the same time, the sum or totality of their outcomes shall constitute and inform the indicative measure of whether the IRs have been accomplished, with the components, either distinctly or in combination, addressing each of the three IRs. The monitoring and evaluation of these components and outcomes are significantly notable for these reflect more the qualitative nature of measuring the level of achievement of the IRs even as the target indicators (both USAID standard indicators and SIKAT's custom indicators) provide the quantitative measurements.

The fulfillment of the various targets shall come at different stages of the two year program implementation and with associations of varying degrees between and among themselves, from one having prerequisite relationships to altogether being separate and independent of another. The amalgamation of all the resulting outcomes and the level of achievement of the target indicators will provide, at the conclusion of the life of the project, the overall accomplishment of Rombion Passage Program.

Component 1: Rehabilitation and conservation of marine habitat of Rombion Passage (IR 1; performance target indicators 1, 2 and 3).

- **Key Activity A. Marine Protected Area (MPA)/Fish Sanctuary Management.**
A network of locally-managed MPAs will be developed and sustained to provide sanctuary to the migratory species such as the sea turtles, pelagic fishes, and marine mammals. The MPAs will also serve as a breeding ground for marine species. All MPAs will be a no-take-zone to allow coral reefs to be rehabilitated and the live coral cover to expand. Conservation priority will be given to nearshore coral reefs where the marginal fishers do their fishing activities particularly during monsoon season. Fishers using non-motorized boats will particularly benefit from the fish spill-over effect of the MPAs. At present, there are fourteen (14) MPAs in the Municipality of Rombion managed by fisher organizations. San Agustin, Santa Maria and Calatrava have one (1) MPA each and these are managed by the LGUs. The capacity of the local resource managers particularly the small-scale fishers in the 17 MPAs need to be strengthened to ensure high community participation and sustained management of protected areas. A resource management plan for each MPA will be developed, reviewed and updated which will incorporate the system for guarding the MPA and enforcing applicable laws and policies. The Program will ensure that all MPAs have a municipal/*barangay* (village) ordinance or resolution that would recognize the management unit and provide logistical and financial support. Additional MPA will be established based on the need and community recommendation. At least 17 locally-managed marine areas covering 219.51 hectares will be managed and sustained under this Program. An MPA conference will be organized to showcase community-based MPA management best practices and strategies. This will be attended by representatives of fisherfolk organizations, local MPA managers, government representatives and other stakeholders.

- Key Activity B. Mangrove Rehabilitation and Management.** Changes in the weather pattern and the increased intensity of typhoons have increased the vulnerabilities of the coastal dwellers against tidal surges, sea water rise and flooding especially during monsoon season. The Program will advocate protection of the remaining mangrove patches that can be found in the coastal areas of Romblon Passage to protect coastal communities. Initial survey of SIKAT shows an area of 15.1773 hectares of mangrove forests in two (2) municipalities. The protection of old-growth mangroves is also in line with the global call for carbon dioxide sequestration. Mangrove reforestation activities/projects will be done in suitable areas of the Passage. Multi-species mangrove nurseries will be set-up in different municipalities. The nurseries will ensure that the diversity of mangrove species will be maintained. Mangrove rehabilitation will also be done in areas experiencing high level of siltation and erosion. Mangrove planting will be conducted in partnership with the fisher organizations, youth organizations, fisheries school, church groups, and other important, willing and interested sectors. The day-to-day management and law enforcement activities however will be done by members of people's organizations and the *barangay* (village) council. At the end of two (2) years, approximately 9.3683 hectares will have been rehabilitated along with 9.73 hectares of old-growth mangroves and secondary growth mangroves that will have been conserved.
- Key Activity C. Alternative/Supplementary Livelihood Support.** The provision of alternative or supplementary livelihood intends to lessen the dependence of coastal settlers on marine resources. Through this strategy, fishing pressure will be lessened and resource regeneration will happen more quickly. There would be a series of consultations and discussions for this activity which will include such tasks as (a) identification of livelihood/business enterprise projects, (b) feasibility study and business planning, (c) setting up of management systems, (d) training on livelihood/business enterprise management, (e) mentoring of key leaders to ensure efficient and functional operations, and (f) turnover of seed capital/investment. At least ten (10) livelihood/business enterprises will be set-up within the two years of program implementation.

Component 2: Protection and management of threatened and endangered species (IR 1; performance target indicators 1 and 2).

- Key Activity A. Sea Turtle Conservation.** SIKAT has an ongoing partnership with the Parks and Wildlife Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (PAWB-DENR) on the protection of sea turtles in the Municipality of Romblon. At least three (3) sea turtle species have been already identified as frequenting the coasts and shores along Romblon Passage namely, Green Sea Turtle, Hawksbill Turtle and Olive Ridley Turtle. All three species are included in the so-called "Red List" of threatened species of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The sea turtle conservation project intends to protect these sea turtles' nesting areas, rescue stranding or injured sea turtles, and eliminate the incidence of illegal catching/capture of sea turtles. Among the activities that shall be undertaken are the following: (a) identification of nesting areas, (b) community consultations, (c) information, education and

communication campaign, (d) nesting area/hatchery management, and (e) setting-up/maintenance of rescue center. All releases of rescued/rehabilitated sea turtles and hatchlings shall be documented, with the information shared with PAWB.

- **Key Activity B. Giant Clams Conservation.** In Romblon, illegal harvesting of giant clams is unfortunately a continuing practice that is largely to blame for the dwindling population/number of the bivalves. Giant clams are even sometimes seen still being sold in the local wet market. The conservation project for these clams aims to protect the wild stock against illegal gathering/harvesting. Campaigns will be done to increase awareness of the general public on the status of giant clam population and the laws protecting these particular marine species. Aside from this, community members shall be engaged to transfer wild stocks to marine protected areas in an effort to encourage spawning. Within the confines of a protected area, the multi-species giant clams will be protected and allowed to reach reproductive maturity. Appropriate resolutions and ordinances shall be advocated in the local *barangay* (village) and municipal councils.
- **Key Activity C. Marine Mammals Conservation.** Romblon Passage is a migratory path of marine mammals which include dolphins, whale sharks and sea cows (*dugong*). However, reported cases of whale sharks being accidentally caught in fish corrals during migration season and dolphins being caught by commercial fishers using purse seines and ring nets reflect the lack of truly appropriate measures to ensure the safe and unhindered passage and stay of these lovely creatures within Romblon waters. The conservation project will conduct campaigns to raise public awareness regarding the state of marine mammals and the necessary protection and conservation that must be afforded them locally. Trainings on marine mammals rescue will be held as well as orientation of deputized fish wardens on relevant laws and the need for strict enforcement to deter the illegal capture and even the unintended slaughter of these mammals.
- **Key Activity D. Partnership-building.** National and local networking will be done to establish partnerships with different government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and national networks that can assist communities in pursuing their environmental and social agenda. Communities will participate in national activities to gather broad support in their advocacies. There would also be a formal partnership with the local fisheries school (Romblon State University) of the province. Faculties and students will be trained in resource monitoring so that they can assist the communities after SIKAT eventually phases-out of the project sites. SIKAT will also lobby for the integration of resource management concepts in the class curriculum.

Of the four (4) target municipalities, two are Integrated Coastal Resource Management Project (ICRMP) sites of this DENR project, namely Sta. Maria and Calatrava. This national government project has so far conducted an orientation and a Trainer's Training on resource assessment (where SIKAT was invited to participate in). Most of the efforts are focused on Tablas Strait which is adjacent to Romblon Passage. In this regard, Romblon Passage Program will complement the ICRMP. The intention is to conduct joint program assessment and CRM planning to synergize the interventions and activities

related to CRM. SIKAT and PAWB-DENR on the other hand have signed a Memorandum of Agreement in 2009 and developed a 5-year sea turtle management plan. Activities identified during the multi-sectoral planning are integrated in the Program. SIKAT and the organizations of small-scale fishers will also explore possible partnership with the newly organized commercial fishers in the Municipality of Romblon.

Component 3: Establish a local coastal resource management (CRM) resource center in Romblon which will provide support to community-based organizations, fisheries school, local government units (LGUs) and other stakeholders (IR 3; performance target indicators 5, 7 and 8).

- **Key Activity. Local Researches.** The local researches will mostly be jointly undertaken by the Program and the people's organizations. Aside from the technical researches and studies, awareness campaign, community-based trainings, and data management will also be conducted. Among the local researches that will be pursued are the following: (1) coral reef assessment and monitoring, (2) fish assessment and monitoring, (3) sea turtle assessment, (4) giant clams monitoring, and (5) mangrove inventory and assessment. Technical researches will be spearheaded by SIKAT and supported by technical experts from the pertinent government agencies, from the faculty and staff of the local fisheries school and from other academic and learning institutions. The research will also incorporate mapping activities using participatory mapping and geographic information system (GIS). LGUs and other conservation organizations will have access to the data which can be used in enhancing resource management systems. The Program will also develop basic coastal resource management modules which will be used in community-based trainings. Trainer's training will be conducted for the community leaders, LGU staff and fisheries school faculty members. Different information, education and communication (IEC) materials will be developed that include primers, posters, billboards, and a children's workbook. Learning activities such as cross-site visits and study tours will be organized to enhance the resource management practices.

Component 4: Organize men and women fishers for pro-active engagement in environmental and social governance (IR 2; performance target indicators 4 and 6).

- **Key Activity. Establishing and Strengthening of Community-Based Organizations.** The success of the Program lies in the capacity and level of participation of the local coastal communities which is why SIKAT will (re)organize and strengthen the community-based organizations in the four partner municipalities in the very initial stages and all throughout the program implementation. At least twenty-five (25) fisherfolk organizations will be strengthened as local partners in resource management. Equal opportunities will be given to women members of the community who want to participate in resource management as surely they will be actively encouraged by the Program. Municipal fisherfolk federations and the women organization Women's League of Romblon will also be greatly supported to carry the task of lobbying for appropriate environmental, social and gender responsive policies at the municipal level. These organizations will largely represent the interests of the local community in

the development planning process. They will also encourage non-PO members to participate in the different activities under this Program.

Local men and women fishers will be trained as deputized fish wardens (*bantay dagat*) and Wildlife Enforcement Officers (WEO). They will partner with the local police in the areas of law enforcement and apprehension. The Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils (FARMCs) at the municipal and *barangay* (village) levels will be reactivated to exercise their rights to participate in the consultative bodies as mandated by the Fisheries Code. Consultations with FARMCs are usually done in developing the fisheries sector agenda and other coastal development plans and activities.

Component 5: Capacitate local resource managers (IR 2; performance target indicators 4 and 6).

- **Key Activity. Capacity-building.** Capacity-building activities shall be geared towards providing the local communities the necessary knowledge, skills and tools in order to sustain the resource management interventions for the Passage. Both men and women fishers will have equal opportunities and access in all the capability building activities. Among the trainings that will be conducted are on the following: Manta Tow, Basic Ecology, Marine Mammals Identification and Rescue, Giant Clams Identification Orientation, Leadership, Project Monitoring and Management, Gender Sensitivity, Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC) and the Magna Carta of Women, Deputation of Local Fish Wardens and Wildlife Enforcement Officers, Paralegal Training, and Livelihood/Business Enterprise Management. Several of these trainings will be done in partnership with concerned government agencies. Other trainings and mentoring sessions not yet identified may also be provided when adjudged necessary.

Component 6: Provide technical assistance for strengthened law enforcement (IR 2; performance target indicators 4 and 6).

- **Key Activity. Technical assistance, trainings and support for local law enforcement.** Community members, particularly fish wardens, will be trained how to conduct themselves during sea patrolling activities they participate in that are undertaken with law enforcement officers and deputized officials. In partnership with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Program will organize paralegal trainings in preparation for the deputation of additional local fish wardens. Trainings for Wildlife Enforcement Officers (WEOs) shall also be conducted in partnership with the DENR to capacitate local community members in dealing with poachers and the like, and more importantly, be champions for the protection endangered animals like sea turtles and marine mammals. The Program will train concerned individuals on very important and relevant environmental laws and policies, standard procedures for apprehensions and the proper use of global positioning system (GPS) devices and other technical equipment. The establishment of a suitable coordination system and arrangement among pertinent individuals and personalities in the four partner municipalities will also be a priority.

Component 7: Institutionalize coastal resource management (CRM) practices in local government unit (LGU) development plans and policies (IR 3; performance target indicators 5, 7 and 8).

- **Key Activity A. Integrated Romblon Passage Coastal Resource Management Plan.** Series of consultations will be done with local resource managers and different stakeholders from the four partner municipalities in preparation for the development of an Integrated CRM Plan. The Program will make sure that the different interests of stakeholders are examined and considered in the proposed plan. A study tour will also be organized to expose representatives from the communities and the LGUs on the advantages of an integrated resource management approach. Representatives of the different groups and organizations will draft the plan while the municipal fisherfolk federations will do the consultations at the ground level. The CRM plans of each municipality shall be integrated into the proposed Romblon Passage CRM Plan. DENR will be invited to participate in the CRM planning in order to align and harmonize principles with the areas covered by the ICRMP. This will ensure that there will be no duplication of activities thus a more efficient use of much needed resources. DENR will also be asked to present and share their assessment of the sites and their recommendations shall be considered in the CRM plans.

Commercial fishers will also be invited to take part in the planning activities. Their interests are important to be considered as well as they, like the small-scale fishers, want their fish catch to be abundant and desire a well-developed fisheries industry in the province. Among topics to be discussed shall be the respective designated fishing areas for the commercial and municipal fishers, fishing gear regulations, size of target fish species, partnership in law enforcement, and the drafting of appropriate municipal ordinances.

- **Key Activity B. Advocacy Agenda Development and Lobbying.** Fisherfolk from each municipality will develop advocacy agenda that would cover resource management and coastal development. The results will be presented to other stakeholders to gather broader support for these municipal advocacies. Capacity on lobbying by small-scale fishers will be enhanced through mentoring sessions that will also sharpen the advocacy strategies. Resolutions at the municipal and *barangay* (village) levels will be pushed that will include financing mechanisms for CRM activities. Municipal fishers will also be encouraged to establish a tactical alliance with commercial fishers on specific and common issues foremost of which is the lobbying for financial support for the overall fisheries industry development along Romblon Passage.
- **Key Activity C. Delineation of Municipal Waters.** Delineation of municipal waters outlines the resource use rights of small-scale fishers as stated in the Philippine Fisheries Code. Two of the target partner municipalities, San Agustin and Sta. Maria, are still using the outdated law as the basis of their municipal fisheries ordinance. By delineating the municipal waters, municipalities will recognize the rights of municipal fishers to exclusively use and manage their fishing grounds. The National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) will conduct trainings on delineation of municipal

waters and actual survey will be done with local fishers. A municipal resolution adopting the coordinates measured by NAMRIA is also necessary to legitimize the rightful claim on the municipal waters. The delineation will lessen the tension between the municipal and commercial fishers by clarifying the boundaries of the municipal waters. The long standing argument of where commercial fishing vessels can operate along Romblon Passage will be settled with the updating of the coordinates contained in the old municipal fisheries ordinances using NAMRIA official measurements. This should result to less incidences of encroachment by commercial fishers, or at the very least, solid, accurate proof of such violations by referencing vessel positions against the adopted NAMRIA coordinates (which is very important in the prosecution of cases). The clarification should also encourage municipal fishers to sustainably utilize and manage their municipal waters.

- **Key Activity D. Training on Conflict Management and Resolution.** In the implementation of Romblon Passage Program, resource use conflicts among different stakeholders are inevitable. These would be conflict that will arise against large-scale commercial fishers, small-scale commercial fishers, municipal/artisanal fishers, compressor divers, stone and marble quarry workers, etc. The community partners should therefore be equipped in handling these conflicts and look for solutions that might provide a win-win situation without compromising critical environmental principles. Key community leaders will be mentored in this regard.

I.3.3. Strategies and Approaches for Sustainability

The Program is designed to develop self-reliant and interdependent communities that can sustain the initiatives undertaken after two years program implementation is over.

Partnership and Alliance Building. Partnerships with different local, national and international organizations will be established and nurtured. Partnerships will be based on shared interests and mutual support that benefits the local communities by way of ensuring continuity of the different program components.

There will be a signed Memorandum of Agreement among the target LGUs. This is to hold the LGU accountable for its part in resource management activities, in providing an enabling environment for the marginalized fishers to engage in governance, in allocating an annual budget for coastal resource management, and in continuing to develop environment-friendly policies and development plans. There will also a Memorandum of Agreement with the *barangays* (villages) if needed. Staff from the office of the Agriculture can also provide technical assistance to the beneficiaries of livelihood projects and conduct monitoring activities.

Partnership between coastal communities and the DENR for wildlife conservation will be reinforced. DENR can provide capability-building trainings for wildlife enforcers per request. DENR, in partnership with the local communities can also develop joint proposal for species-specific conservation. SIKAT will also facilitate the linkages between the BFAR and local communities. BFAR provides support in the conduct of underwater resource assessment, in the provision of livelihood projects and in law enforcement activities and sea patrolling.

Environmental trainings and technical researches will be done in partnership with the local fisheries school, the Romblon State University (RSU). Fisherfolk organizations can tap the expertise of the faculty and students through the school's community extension program which the Program fully intends to make full advantage of via a formal partnership with RSU.

People's organizations will also be encouraged to engage with national federations and networks to access support in enhancing their resource management know-how and practices. The association with these national groups will certainly benefit the local fisherfolk organizations in the area of legislative lobby work. Among the organizations that they can partner with are the NGOs for Fisheries Reform (NFR), *Budyong*, and the Philippine Locally-Managed Marine Area (PhiLMMA) Network. PhiLMMA is the local country network of the Locally-Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network, a regional network in Asia-Pacific that aims to improve the practice of marine conservation. The network is present in seven (7) countries. Currently, nine (9) marine protected area sites in Romblon are members of the network and SIKAT holds the position of country co-coordinator.

Governance. The Program will organize, assist and strengthen community-based organizations (CBOs) such as fisherfolk organizations and federations, women's federation, FARMCs, *bantay dagat* (fish warden) groups, and Wildlife Enforcer Officers (WEOs) where the local community members can actively get involved with. Through these CBOs, communities can elevate their collective voice in *barangay* (village) and municipal development planning process, as well as the actual implementation of resource management activities. A properly organized and run CBO can gain access to various development opportunities.

Management and operational systems will also be established among program partners. The Program shall enhance the module that SIKAT has developed and train an Organizational Development (OD) Team among the fisherfolk leaders to provide continuing support to the other grassroots organizations. The OD Team will have the capacity to assess the CBOs, provide recommendations and provide assistance in implementing interventions within the organization.

Financing. Community-based organizations shall lobby for the annual budget of coastal resource management (CRM) activities in their respective municipalities. At present, the Municipality of Romblon has steadily provided counterpart funding/support for resource management related activities and livelihood projects. The budget will include allocation for sea patrolling, maintenance of marine protected areas and livelihood activities among others.

A user's fee/rent for tourism use in marine protected areas will be enforced (i.e. payment from tourists engaging in snorkeling and diving activities). Part of the revenue shall be used for resource management and related activities.

The Program will also capacitate local organizations in developing project proposals to ensure that even after the program ends, communities are capable of sourcing external fund support for their worthwhile projects. Assistance shall also be provided in establishing community enterprises. Portions of the income/revenue can be used in sustaining the organizations and financing the organization's priority activities.

Technology Transfer. The Program will train select community members, LGU staff and faculty and students of Romblon State University in the areas of resource assessments, livelihood development, project proposal making and data management among others. Training modules and primers pertaining to these topics and fields will be made readily available to the local community by distributing copies to the local fisherfolk organizations and relevant local government offices.

Climate Change Community Adaptation Measures. The Program has the following strategies to help lessen the impact of climate change: gene banking by setting-up fish sanctuaries/marine protected areas, multi-species mangrove nurseries, giant clams stocking, protecting sea turtle nesting areas and threatened and endangered marine mammal species. These strategies that will be employed will ensure that marine biodiversity in Romblon Passage will be sustained or have the capacity to be rehabilitated.

Fish sanctuaries are no-take zones which provide habitat to different marine organisms. The network of marine protected areas along Romblon Passage provides a higher chance of survival particularly for commercially-viable species. There has been an observed increase of species recruitment in the fish sanctuaries and adjacent reefs. This certainly contributes to the resiliency of coastal communities that highly depend on the marine resources of the Passage against detrimental effects of climate change.

All endemic mangrove species will be stored in the mangrove nurseries. This is to make sure that all species will be maintained despite the threat posed by strong typhoons and tidal surges. The succeeding mangrove reforestation and rehabilitation activities shall eventually protect coastal dwellings from violent waves and strong wind gusts. Through the support of the Program, a campaign to conserve the remaining mangrove areas and increase the mangrove cover by planting multi-species mangrove seedlings and propagules shall be high in the priority. Mangroves also protect the waterbed against salt-water intrusion.

The community members will also put more attention to the nesting areas that are affected with sea water rise. Sea turtle eggs will be transferred to the hatchery to increase the survival rate of hatchlings. The community will likewise continue to guard the nesting sites against predators and illegal egg gatherers/poachers.

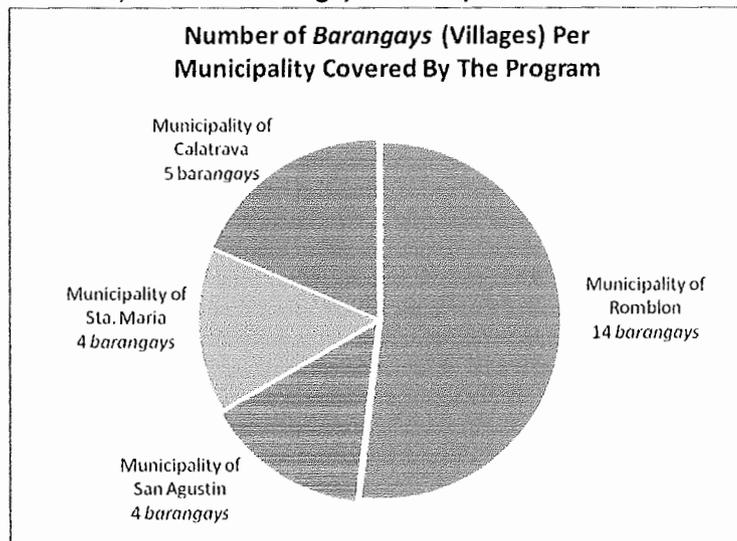
The Program will also address the issue of food security especially among the poor coastal communities by providing options wherein they can lessen their dependence on food imports. Livelihood projects will promote food production such as dried/processed fish which will make food available in the island even during monsoon season. This will also provide alternative or supplementary income for fishers when it is not possible for them to fish due to inclement weather and strong waves.

The technical researches (i.e. coral assessment, fish visual census) will also focus on monitoring the status of critical marine resources in the context of climate change. The results will be used as an input in the coastal resource management planning of the four partner municipalities. Adaptation and mitigating measures will be considered in these CRM plans.

II. Achievement of Objectives

II.1. Coverage

In the two year implementation of the Romblon Passage Program, a total of twenty-seven (27) *barangays* (villages) in the four (4) partner municipalities were covered and supported full time by the Program while eight (8) more were provided a variety of assistance (e.g. community trainings, technical and logistical support for environmental and resource management activities). The 27 *barangays* correspond to the number of fisherfolk organizations and



community-based organizations that the Program directly organized or reorganized, mentored, guided and assisted in their organizational development, conceptualization of projects they wanted to implement, and development of organizational plans, structures, strategies and programs for natural resource management as well as advocacy agenda and partnerships/networks. There is a one-to-one equivalence between the *barangays* and the local community-based organizations with the lone exception of the *barangay* of

Figure 4. Distribution of Assisted *Barangays* By Municipality

Agnay where two (2) local groups are established, a fisherfolk organization and an all-women association (see Table 1, Annex A).

The service areas were mostly *barangays* where the communities have not formally established their organizations but still wanted to get involved with resource management activities and the community trainings of the Program. The five (5) *barangays* of Cabolutan, Cagboaya, Bachawan, Doña Juana and Dubduban in the Municipality of San Agustin all actively participated in mangrove management related efforts, realizing the importance of taking care of the mangrove forest areas in their communities. This effectively increases the Program's presence in that municipality to nine (9) *barangays* out of a total fifteen (15) *barangays*. Bgy. Sto. Niño in Sta. Maria and Bgys. Agnaga and Calabogo in Romblon on the other hand were very interested to learn more about sea turtles frequenting their shores and were encouraged by campaigns of the Program to help protect these marine creatures.

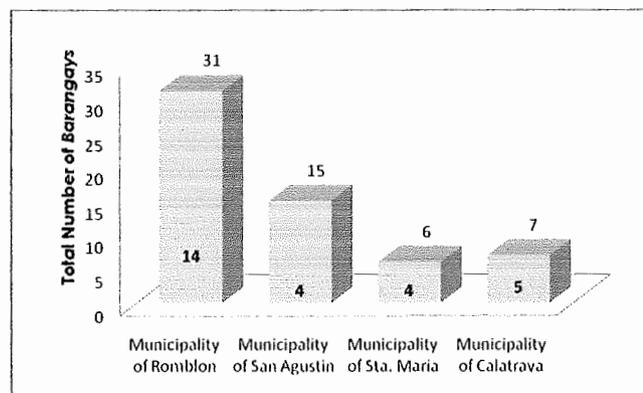


Figure 5. Number of Assisted *Barangays* Compared to Total Number *Barangays* in the Municipality

II.2. Accomplishments and Results

II.2.1. Program Component Outcomes

II.2.1.1. Component 1: Rehabilitation and conservation of marine habitat of Romblon Passage (IR 1; performance target indicators 1, 2 and 3)

- ***Key Activity A. Marine Protected Area (MPA)/Fish Sanctuary Management***
Under this activity, a network of eighteen (18) marine protected areas/fish sanctuaries were managed and maintained by local fisherfolk organizations and communities with the support of the Program. These MPAs play the part of a web of safe havens or refuge for fishes and other marine species scattered throughout the vastness of Romblon Passage. The rationale behind the establishment and maintenance of such a network, indeed as the rationale for putting up any MPA, is to provide an area where fishes can breed, lay eggs, and grow to maturity undisturbed. With eighteen such areas, the process of restoring the health of the Passage as a vital marine corridor is accelerated because the positive effects brought about by an MPA occurs in more “pockets” of the seas and over a wider spread.

The Municipality of Romblon, with municipal waters more than quadruple in size than the next largest municipal waters, has fourteen (14) of the eighteen MPAs. The list of MPAs is presented below:

ROMBLON

1. TAKOT REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Cobrador
2. SOFT CORAL GARDEN FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Alad
3. KAN-UGAW REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Logbon
4. SILANGA REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Agnay
5. Barangay MAPULA FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY
6. SAN PEDRO FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Ginablan
7. ACROPORA GARDEN FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Agnipa
8. PARK FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Lunas
9. APUNAN UNDERWATER CAVE FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Agpanabat
10. UNDERWATER PARADISE FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Sablayan
11. Barangay LI-O FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY
12. LONOS REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Lonos
13. GUIMPINGAN REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Guimpingan
14. AGTONGO ROCK FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY in Barangay Agtongo

SAN AGUSTIN

15. Barangay CARMEN-CABOLUTAN FISH SANCTUARY
16. BINONGAAN FISH SANCTUARY in Barangay Binongaan

STA. MARIA

17. Barangay CONCEPCION NORTE MPA

CALATRAVA

18. Barangay BALOGO MPA

The first-ever MPA Conference in the Province of Romblon was also held in January 2012 under the auspices of the Program, with participants (34 males, 13 females) coming not only from the partner MPA sites in the four partner municipalities but also from four (4) more neighboring municipalities namely Ferrol, Alcantara, Corquera and Looc. These are municipalities who either have their own MPAs already existing or are planning to establish one. The conference was a venue for sharing best practices in the management of MPAs and lessons learned in the vast and rich experience of establishing, managing and sustaining marine protected areas between and among the twenty-one (21) MPA practitioners in attendance. The event also served as community-building session among not only MPA managers but resource managers in general along with leaders in government and local groups and communities. The Conference presented different management models, from community-based to LGU managed areas, tackled issues often encountered and possible solutions/interventions, and instructed on the essential elements of managing an MPA, from the proper legislative process to legitimize the MPA, the rationale and necessity of strict enforcement, the need for resource allocation, to the awareness campaign and even options for resource rent/user's fee.

In addition to these eighteen marine protected areas/fish sanctuaries, twelve (12) more protected areas, specifically mangrove protected forests/areas had themselves a management plan developed and/or reviewed, updated and implemented in the course of the two year program implementation. These sites include those situated in Bgys. Agnay, Li-O, Logbon and Ginablan in Romblon and in Bgy. Balogo in Calatrava. Seven mangrove areas that also produced and implemented a management plan are found in San Agustin, namely those in Bgys. Carmen, Sugod, Cabolutan, Doña Juana, Cagboaya, Dubduban and Bachawan.

- ***Key Activity B. Mangrove Rehabilitation and Management***

The target for this activity was to maintain two (2) multi-species mangrove nurseries. The Program however was able to establish and maintain seven (7) multi-species mangrove nurseries in five (5) communities in Bgys. Li-O and Ginablan in Romblon, Bgys. Carmen and Sugod in San Agustin, and Bgy. Balogo in Calatrava. A total of 77,212 seedlings consisting of thirteen (13) mangrove species were collected and taken care of in these nurseries (This includes the 10,000 seedlings placed in the nursery in Bgy. Logbon that was established by the community independent of the Program. There were 8,000 more seedlings separately collected by a partner organization and placed in their own nursery in Bgy. Agnay that the community also put up by themselves).

A total of 10.66 hectares of mangrove areas were reforested/planted with species historically known to grow in those particular ten (10) areas/sites. Aside from these, 55.23 hectares of old-growth mangroves were protected and managed by communities. As was stated, mangrove management plans were crafted to address how the protection of mangroves from illegal cutters shall be undertaken. The implementation of these plans and overall management of the mangrove areas fall under the responsibility of the multi-sectoral mangrove management councils set-up primarily for those very purpose. Bgy. Li-O has its own Mangrove Management Council for the mangrove forest in its *barangay* (village) and so does Bgy. Balogo that in the first quarter of 2013

reviewed and drafted the Mangrove *Barangay* Ordinance together with the U.S. Peace Corps volunteer assigned in the Municipality of Calatrava. The seven mangrove sites in the Municipality of San Agustin meanwhile is under one, larger multi-sectoral Mangrove Management Council. The mangrove area in Bgys. Ginablan, Agnay and Logbon on the other hand are managed by their respective local fisherfolk organizations.

- ***Key Activity C. Alternative/Supplementary Livelihood Support***
Among all the key activities of the Program, the provision of alternative or supplementary livelihood/business enterprise support was one of the most intricate and tricky. SIKAT wanted to reach out to the marginalized groups in the communities, and thus, targeted people's organizations (POs) with least capacities and resources for the capacity-building in enterprise development and management component of the Program. The grant of seed capital/investment was simple enough but the process by which local community-based organizations came up with their respective ideas for a livelihood project and the ensuing progression of these organizations in assimilating the necessary know-how and tools to run and manage those projects took longer than expected. The unimpressive viability of submitted livelihood/enterprise project proposals by the communities and people's organizations signified that the preparedness of organizations to take on the responsibilities of running their own enterprises were still raw and that the know-how and confidence needs more priming and time.

The strong participatory nature in the selection process of proposals that will be funded also added to the delays in implementation of livelihood/enterprise projects. The respective municipal fisherfolk federations had the privilege on signing off on the proposals to be supported to ensure that projects are aligned, or are at least not contradictory, to their advocacies and environmental principles. Capability wise, additional capacity building and mentoring activities were deemed necessary to support the POs with the least capacities.

No actual livelihood project/business enterprise was implemented in the first year of the Program although twenty-seven (27) persons comprised of ten (10) females and seventeen (17) males from fourteen (14) communities have been given training on project proposal development. Project proposals with considerable potential for success slowly emerged through Year 2 as organizations were continually guided and mentored in the process of making feasibility studies and business planning. Eventually, several community-based organizations settled on similar livelihood ideas, the putting up of rice retailing stores and wet stalls to be precise. Much analysis, consideration and scenario building went into the ultimate decision to support the same business enterprises, with three (3) communities putting up wet stalls and two (2) going into rice retailing. These business endeavors were addressing a need of their communities and were profitably sound based on the submitted project proposals. It should be also noted that there is no competition between and among these stores as they are physically far apart and will be serving distinct communities/markets.

The other livelihood projects are the milkfish semi-intensive aquaculture pond, the dried squid processing, the smoked fish processing, an egg retailing business, and an eco-

tourism enterprise. A total of ten (10) livelihood projects were funded by the Program with direct beneficiaries of 174 households as identified by the implementing partner people's organizations themselves based on qualifications/criteria they have internally set.

II.2.1.2. Component 2: Protection and management of threatened and endangered species (IR 1; performance target indicators 1 and 2)

- ***Key Activity A. Sea/Marine Turtle Conservation***

Under this key activity, twenty-nine (29) nesting areas situated in twenty-two (22) *barangay* (villages)/communities were protected and monitored in the two year life of the Program. Twenty-eight (28) *barangays* (villages) were given sea/marine turtle management orientation, five each from the municipalities of Calatrava and San Agustin, four from Sta. Maria and fourteen from Romblon. A total of 927 individuals received this training, 415 males and 512 females.

Aside from the 22 sea/marine turtle management plans that were integrated into the respective resource management plans of the said 22 communities now very actively involved in sea turtle conservation and protection, three (3) Marine Turtle Conservation Action Plan (MTCAP) were formulated and developed in the municipalities of San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Romblon, with the first two undertaken for the first time owed to initiatives by the Program. Although Romblon's MTCAP had been previously created under preceding SIKAT efforts, this is however further enhanced and continued by the USAID-funded Program.

Also achieved under this key activity are the respective Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) between the PAWB-DENR and the municipalities of San Agustin and Sta. Maria, agreements that set out the primary responsibilities and obligations of the contracting parties when it comes to sea/marine turtle concerns (This MOA is similar to the one also executed previously by the Municipality of Romblon with PAWB). In connection with this MOA, the Municipality of Sta. Maria has put up a new sea/marine turtle rescue center that will operate as the de facto rescue center of the three partner municipalities situated in the island of Tablas, in the same way the rescue center maintained by the people's organization PAWIKAN in Bgy. Agpanabat serves the whole island municipality of Romblon across the Passage. PAWB benefits from this arrangement as data on sea turtle eggs laid, hatched and released back to the wild, as well as those rescued and tagged, is forwarded to them contributing to their national database.

A total of 1,930 hatchlings were released into the wild comprised of 580 Green Sea Turtles and 1, 350 Hawksbill Turtles. Ten (10) Hawksbill Turtles and three (3) Green Sea Turtles have also been rescued from being stranded or trapped in nets and released.

- ***Key Activity B. Giant Clams Conservation***

The giant clams conservation project originally targeted to restock two hundred (200) wild clams inside marine protected areas (MPAs) managed by the Program's partner

local organizations. However, only one hundred twenty-four (124) giant clams were restocked inside ten (10) MPA sites. The results of subsequent area scanning and giant clams inventories done from August to October 2012 indicated that there were no longer a wild giant clams observed suitable for restocking. Giant clams found were those that were already securely embedded in corals and those inhabiting depths of 25 feet or more, and the guidelines for restocking prescribe that under such circumstances, the giant clams were not to be collected and disturbed anymore. The aim of restocking was to increase the probability of fertilization and to protect these wild giant clams from illegal harvesting. The Threat Reduction Assessment conducted during an inter-municipal evaluation strongly suggested that the threat of illegal harvest of giant clams has been reduced by as much as 80%. While there were giant clams observed outside marine protected areas and on the outside fringes of coral reefs, it was decided that the restocking of these giant clams inside MPAs was no longer viable given the circumstances and seemingly no longer necessary, at least for the time being. It should be noted that SIKAT has also restocked 120 wild giant clams before, beginning in 2009, under a prior program. One highlight for this key activity is the restocking of two (2) pieces of the rare giant clam species *Hippopus porcellanus* in a marine protected area in the Municipality of Calatrava, the only municipality where this particular bivalve has been actually observed. The rare species is known to be restricted to the Sulu and West Philippine Seas and select areas in Indonesia, Palau and the Philippines.

The training module for giant clams identification and management was largely taken from the training and materials received by two of SIKAT's staff from a study tour made to the Xavier University McKeough Marine Center in Cagayan De Oro that was facilitated by Dr. Hilly Ann Roa-Quiaoit, an acknowledged expert on giant clams in the country.

- **Key Activity C. Marine Mammals Conservation**

In the third quarter of 2011, the Program already conducted a multi-sectoral marine mammals conservation planning workshop participated in by representatives from relevant organizations, groups and local government offices of the four (4) partner municipalities. This workshop formulated 3-year Marine Mammal Conservation Plan that was adopted by the municipalities and integrated in the plans and activities of the eventual Integrated Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council of the municipalities of Calatrava, San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Romblon or the CASAMARRO IFARMC, the inter-LGU alliance established to manage and rehabilitate Romblon Passage in cooperation and coordination with relevant public and private sector groups. An integrated marine mammals conservation plan was correspondingly developed for Romblon Passage. The Program's resource person and partner for marine mammal conservation has been Dr. Lemnuel Aragonés of the University of the Philippines Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology and co-convenor of the Phil. Marine Mammal Stranding Network (PMMSN).

Thirty (30) billboards were produced and put up to raise public awareness about marine mammals conservation and protection along with three hundred (300) posters that were developed, produced and posted/distributed to educate the general public of the

significance of marine mammals and the necessity to make sure they are free from harm. A training on marine mammal identification and rescue was also conducted participated in by fifty-seven (57) representatives from the local and communities, other non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and the local government unit. A significant achievement is the 80% decrease in threat to marine mammals based on the threat reduction assessment (TRA) undertaken during the conduct of an inter-municipal evaluation of this key activity.

- ***Key Activity D. Partnership-building***

Partnership with the DENR, specifically PAWB, was further expanded as respective Memoranda of Agreement were executed between the Department and the municipalities of San Agustin and Sta. Maria for sea/marine turtle protection and conservation. The DENR provided the capability-building training for wildlife enforcement officers (WEOs) through their Provincial Environmental and Natural Resources Office (PENRO). Through the collaboration with DENR, forty-three (43) new individuals were trained and deputized as local WEOs not only for sea turtles but also for all endangered and vulnerable flora and fauna that should be protected.

The Program continued providing support to local organizations and community leaders in their engagement with other like-minded groups like the Locally-Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network, a regional network in Asia-Pacific that aims to improve the practice of marine conservation, and its local affiliate, the Philippine Locally-Managed Marine Area (PhiLMMA) Network. The coordination and sharing of ideas, practices and strategies with groups such as the PhiLMMA, the Phil. Marine Mammal Stranding Network (PMMSN), and even the NGOs for Fisheries Reform (NFR) have vastly enriched the knowledge and appreciation of local resource managers on the conservation work they were undertaking. This has also provided them with much-needed moral support and have further increased their drive and determination to continue with their advocacy and efforts in resource management.

Another important partner of the Program has been the Romblon State University (RSU) whose faculty and students have actively participated in mangrove reforestation activities as well as the mapping of old growth mangrove forests and sea/marine turtle nesting sites. Other organizations/groups that have partnered with the Program specifically on mangrove rehabilitation activities are the Provincial Women's League of Romblon (PWLR), the local Alternative Learning System (ALS) program of the Department of Education in the partner municipalities, the Philippine National Police and various religious and youth groups. The volunteer from the U.S. Peace Corps regularly joined the underwater assessments and giant clams restocking while also the main driving force in the establishment of the Mangrove and Bird Sanctuary in Bgy. Ginablan.

A group of dive shop operators has also been a significant partner in the awareness campaign to respect the no-take zone nature of MPAs. The group has also pledged to provide free SCUBA training to local resource managers to reinforce the pool of existing local divers. An unlikely partnership was also developed with an organization of small-scale commercial fishing operators in addressing fisheries management concerns.

II.2.1.3. Component 3: Establish a local coastal resource management (CRM) resource center in Romblon which will provide support to community-based organizations, fisheries school, local government units (LGUs) and other stakeholders (IR 3; performance target indicators 5, 7 and 8)

- ***Key Activity. Local Researches***

In the two years of program implementation, nineteen (19) underwater coral and fish assessments were conducted in ten (10) sites. Nine of these sites now have 2-year data sets for both coral cover and fish assessments while the tenth site was assessed for the first time in relation to the site being proposed as marine protected area/fish sanctuary (which it eventually was declared as by the municipal government, and which is eighteenth partner marine protected area of the Program).

The Program utilized the photo transect method for the coral assessment and identification and the fish visual census method for the fish assessment and identification. The processed data took note of the percentage cover due to hard and soft corals, dead corals, sponges, algae and other marine plants, as well as other marine living things and abiotic components of the sea including sand, rocks and rubbles of dead corals. The fish visual census on the other hand not only provided an approximation of the general fish stock and size of observed fish species but also identified the indicator fish species and their respective abundance. The latter suggests what commercially important fish species are in good to large stock at the time of the assessment.

The twenty-nine (29) observed nesting sites of marine/sea turtles resulting from the sea turtle conservation activities were also documented and mapped, with laid eggs and the resulting hatchlings recorded. The information gathered from these sites were forwarded and shared with the PAWB-DENR. The ten (10) MPA sites where wild giant clams were restocked were likewise documented and marked, with an annual inventory undertaken including the individual measurement monitoring of the clams. In addition, ten (10) mangrove rehabilitation sites have been mapped and had their measurement data updated to global positioning system (GPS) coordinates from the original quadrant measurements, making it suitable and easier for plotting on standard topographic maps.

The results of all these assessments and researches have also been properly communicated back to relevant government offices and local groups and communities. To further the sharing of the information and the significance and relevance of these studies to the overall resource management efforts, twenty-five (25) local community members have been trained and mentored as local trainers capable of conducting the community-based trainings and orientations designed to educate and inform the public of the importance of sustainably managing the natural resources.

This key activity, indeed Component 3, certainly contributed extensively not only to the achievement of IR 3 but IR 2 as well.

II.2.1.4. Component 4: Organize men and women fishers for pro-active engagement in environmental and social governance (IR 2; performance target indicators 4 and 6)

- ***Key Activity. Establishing and Strengthening of Community-Based Organizations***
A total of twenty-eight (28) fisherfolk organizations have been guided and supported by the Program. Through such guidance, all 28 have enhanced their respective systems and policies to be gender responsive and 25 have maintained at least a 35% female-to-65% male gender ratio in their memberships. Overall, the percentage of females in the total number of members of partner POs reached 51%.

The organizations have also been assisted in their organizational development process, visioning exercises and planning workshops. The influence of the Program on has been considerable as these local organizations have taken to seriously adopting environmental and sustainable development principles into their vision, mission and goals. All twenty-eight organizations are presently engaged in coastal resource management and have actively participated in various resource management activities the past two years. Each have formalized their own resource management program within their organizations.

Each partner municipality has now a municipal fisherfolk federation engaged in municipal-wide advocacy for fisheries reform and development and natural resource management. This coincides very well with the four municipal fisheries and aquatic resources management councils (MFARMCs) that were reactivated and supported by the Program to spearhead and coordinate the local management efforts. Furthermore, the significance and contributions of the women sector have become known as the Program has underscored the role women play in the different aspects of the resource management paradigm. In connection with this, 1,363 women have been won over to vigorously participate in resource management planning and various activities.

II.2.1.5. Component 5: Capacitate local resource managers (IR 2; performance target indicators 4 and 6)

- ***Key Activity. Capacity-building***
Various trainings, orientations and certification/deputation seminars were undertaken by local government officials and local fisherfolk organization members under the Program. All these were held in order to increase the knowledge and skills of local resource managers as well as share and transfer the task of resource management locally.

In the case of fish wardens and wildlife enforcement officers, the training seminars conducted deputized them as legitimate law enforcers. Moreover, the trainings empowered them by clarifying their authority, rights, and duties as law enforcers especially on the correct legal and technical procedure (i.e. in apprehending violators) and case documentation. These also informed them of the responsibilities and obligations they have to fulfill in resource management. Thirty-four (34) individuals composed of eleven (11) women and twenty-three (23) men were deputized as fish

wardens by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) under the Program while forty-three (43), nineteen (19) females and twenty-four (24) males, were certified and deputized as wildlife enforcement officers (WEOs) by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) of the DENR. Together with those already deputized at the commencement of the Program, these add up to respective totals of 155 fish wardens (28 females and 127 males) and 77 WEOs (26 females and 51 males) that were engaged in law enforcement activities. Additionally, a total of fifty-three (53) individuals (18 females and 35 males) participated in the paralegal training arranged by the Program.

Among the other trainings that the Program provided, fifty-seven (57) persons were trained on marine mammal identification and rescue, thirty (30) individuals were trained on wild giant clams identification and restocking management, and two hundred fifteen (215) men and women (121 and 94 respectively) from five (5) communities were trained on manta tow and snorkel survey assessment. Basic ecology orientations were conducted in fifteen (15) communities, leadership trainings were given to seventeen (17) people's organizations, gender sensitivity and violence against women and children (VAWC) orientations were organized in also seventeen (17) communities, and livelihood management trainings were provided to sixty (60) representatives of local community-based organizations.

II.2.1.6. Component 6: Provide technical assistance for strengthened law enforcement (IR 2; performance target indicators 4 and 6)

- ***Key Activity. Technical assistance, trainings and support for local law enforcement***

Technical assistance and logistical support have been provided and sustained throughout the life of the Program to the LGUs, the police maritime group, fish wardens and volunteer community members for sea patrolling activities in the Passage. In the focus group discussion held to assess the effects of the Program's various interventions for resource management, local stakeholders opined that the intrusion of commercial fishers and the incidence of illegal fishing activities have decreased by approximately 85%.

The cooperation and coordination among the concerned groups (Philippine National Police-Maritime Group, the LGUs, the *bantay dagat* or fish wardens, the people's organizations managing the MPAs, SIKAT who provides technical assistance, and the local communities in general) have resulted in two hundred thirty-one (231) individuals apprehended for various violations; 22 for compressor fishing, 101 for using active fishing gears, 22 for commercial fishing operations inside municipal waters, 14 for encroaching on marine protected areas, and 72 for being unregistered fishers and/or using unregistered fishing boats. Forty-one (41) unregistered boats were also cited (and eventually registered) during the time, along with nine (9) commercial fishing boats that encroached on municipal waters. One instance of an illegal transport of aquarium fishes from Sibuyan Island was also averted. The initiative of the Program has produced a

significant impetus among stakeholders that paved the way for the institutionalization of active and regular sea patrolling of the law enforcement composite team. On the intertidal front, three (3) individuals were fined for cutting mangroves for household fuelwood while two (2) others had a case filed against them for illegal sand quarrying.

The Program conducted a law enforcement forum attended by thirty-six (36) stakeholders/representatives from the four (4) partner municipalities where the importance of upholding established laws to the rehabilitation of Romblon Passage and the conservation of its marine resources was discussed along with championing the preferential rights of the marginal fisherfolk in the utilization of municipal waters as provided by the Fisheries Code. The forum jumpstarted the drafting of enforcement plans and strategies that would be endorsed to the IFARMC.

Massive campaigns were also held for fisherfolk registration. In addition, there was an ocular inspection of deployed fish aggregating devices within municipal waters. Owners and operators were informed to have these implements registered with the municipality while those whose fish aggregating devices were found within the 10 kilometer zone of the municipal waters were given notice to remove them. Relocating these devices within the 10.1 to 15 kilometer zone would also require approval first from the concerned municipality.

Component 6 is likewise a large contributor to realizing IR 3.

II.2.1.7. Component 7: Institutionalize coastal resource management (CRM) practices in local government unit (LGU) development plans and policies (IR 3; performance target indicators 5, 7 and 8)

- ***Key Activity A. Integrated Romblon Passage Coastal Resource Management Plan***
Numerous consultations among stakeholders in the four (4) partner municipalities were conducted concerning the Romblon Passage integrated marine corridor management. These consultations intensified in the second half of the calendar year 2011 as the Program and its partners worked hard to formalize the Calatrava, San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Romblon Integrated Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council or the CASAMARRO IFARMC, an inter-LGU alliance for the management, protection and rehabilitation of Romblon Passage.

CASAMARRO IFARMC was made official in November 2011 by the local chief executives of the four (4) partner municipalities through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This was also formally endorsed by the Provincial Governor of Romblon and the Representative of the Lone District of Romblon as both government officials also attended the signing of the MOA. The officers of the executive board of the newly-created body were also elected during the same proceedings, with the Mayor of the Municipality of Romblon being elected as the Chairperson. In the months that followed, the Program guided the development and the process of drafting the Integrated Romblon Passage Coastal Resource Management Plan with local partners.

- ***Key Activity B. Advocacy Agenda Development and Lobbying***
The Program was highly instrumental in the development/updating of the respective fisherfolk advocacy agenda in the four (4) municipalities. The municipal federation *KAPAMILYA ng Romblon* and the Sta. Maria Alliance of Indigenous Fisher Folks Association (SALIFA) both actively advocated for sustainable livelihood and engaged municipal fishers in the management of their respective municipal waters. Meanwhile, San Agustin Fisher Folks Association (SAFFA, Inc.) focused on mangrove rehabilitation and management and likewise on sustainable livelihood. The Alliance of Calatrava Fisherfolk Association (ACFA) was the last federation established as the Municipality of Calatrava was an all-new, expansion area for the Program implementers. It, too, has decided to focused primarily in engaging the municipal fishers to be involved in the management of their municipal waters.

Twenty-one (21) municipal/*barangay* (village) fishery related ordinances and/or resolutions were passed in the two year implementation of the Program under this key activity. As important as the enactment of these orders and regulations is the declaration that significant steps were already being undertaken to address issues besetting municipal fisheries and the engendering of public support and enthusiasm to get involved in these efforts. This is compelling reason why it has to be noted that this key activity played a great deal in accomplishing IR 2 as well.

- ***Key Activity C. Delineation of Municipal Waters***
Multi-sectoral consultations in the two municipalities of San Agustin and Calatrava regarding the clarification of the boundaries and delineation of municipal waters were conducted by the Program with the end goal of formalizing the extent and limits of the municipal waters of these towns in their respective comprehensive municipal fisheries ordinance. A final, joint consultation was conducted facilitated by a resource person/engineer from the Hydrography Department of the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA) who personally verified the coordinates of the limits/boundaries of the municipal waters in question at sea together with the local stakeholders. NAMRIA is the sole entity mandated and authorized by the Fisheries Code for the delineation of municipal waters. The respective municipal ordinances referencing the global positioning coordinates of the limits of the municipal waters were eventually finalized, adopted and approved by the local municipal councils.
- ***Key Activity D. Training on Conflict Management and Resolution***
To help address the inevitable resource use conflicts among the many stakeholders in the Passage, the Program provided a Conflict Management with Negotiation Training for twenty-four (24) women and twenty-seven (27) men fisherfolk leaders from the four (4) partner municipalities to equip them with the skills necessary to spearhead and navigate the process of conflict resolution. The training was supplemented by subsequent mentoring sessions and exercises by which these conflict managers could practice the know-how they have acquired in the training. The whole experience throughout the life of the Program has made the fisherfolk leaders adept at engaging and negotiating with even high-ranking government officials and the like. Their confidence have been given a

boost and their communication proficiency have vastly improved due to the attention that the Program has provided to developing their skills.

This key activity also contributed to attaining IR 2 inasmuch as Component 7 largely advanced the cause of IR 1.

II.2.2. Principal Accomplishments Per Objective

In terms of the Program Objectives, the following present a summary of what were the actual accomplishments against the target/expected accomplishments:

II.2.2.1. Objective 1: To rehabilitate marine habitats and restore ecological functions that could support the marine biodiversity of Romblon Passage by implementing diverse resource management strategies and mechanisms

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Target Output	Variance
Under Component 1: Rehabilitation and conservation of marine habitat of Romblon Passage		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A network of 18 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)/Fish Sanctuaries covering 229 hectares managed and sustained by communities 	At least 18 MPAs	-
	At least 219.51 ha	(+) 0.9585 ha
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 new locally-managed MPA established 	1	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 MPA/Fish Sanctuary and Mangrove management plans developed or reviewed/updated, and implemented 	At least 25 MPAs and Mangrove Mgt. Plans	(+) 5 MPAs and Mangrove Mgt. Plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased fish catch by 20% 	20%	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted an MPA Conference participated in by 21 MPA sites 	At least 17 MPA sites	(+) 4 MPA sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven (7) multi-species mangrove nurseries maintained 	At least 2 multi-species mangrove nurseries	(+) 5 mangrove nurseries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55.23 hectares of old-growth mangroves protected and managed by communities 	At least 9.73 hectares	(+) 45.50 ha
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10.66 hectares of mangroves reforested 	At least 9.37 hectares	(+) 1.29 ha
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livelihood projects implemented in ten (10) communities 	10 communities	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased income of 174 direct households beneficiaries as a result of supplementary livelihood projects 	At least 200 households	(-) 26 direct household beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 communities trained on feasibility study and business planning 	10 communities	(+) 4 communities

II.2.2.2. Objective 2: To engage multi-sectoral groups in the protection and management of threatened and endangered marine species in Romblon Passage

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Target Output	Variance
Under Component 2: Protection and management of threatened and endangered species		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 sea turtle nesting areas protected from illegal sea turtle egg gathering and 1 hatchery maintained 	At least 6 nesting areas	(+) 23 nesting areas
	At least 1 hatchery	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 communities involved in sea turtle conservation 	At least 6 communities	(+) 16 communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 sea turtle management plans integrated in the community resource management plan 	At least six (6) sea turtle management plans	(+) 16 sea turtle management plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 communities oriented on sea turtle management 	25 communities	(+) 3 communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased illegal harvesting of giant clams by 80% 	80%	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 124 giant clams restocked inside Marine Protected Areas 	At least 200 giant clams	(-) 76 giant clams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An integrated marine mammals conservation plan developed for Romblon Passage 	1 plan	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessened the threat to marine mammals by 80% 	80%	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted marine mammals conservation planning workshop attended by resource managers from the four (4) partner municipalities 	1 planning workshop	-

II.2.2.3. Objective 3: To establish and maintain a local coastal resource management resource center that would enhance the resource management practices of local partners and other stakeholders

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Target Output	Variance
Under Component 3: Establish a local coastal resource management (CRM) resource center in Romblon which will provide support to community-based organizations, fisheries school, local government units (LGUs) and other stakeholders		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Year 1: Technical researches conducted on coral reef status inside and outside marine protected areas in 9 sites 	At least 9 sites	-
	At least 8 sites	(+) 1 site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Year 2: Technical researches conducted on coral reef status inside and outside marine protected areas in 9 sites (Plus 1 which was for the newly-established MPA) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Year 1: Conducted fish stock assessment in 9 sites 	At least 9 sites	-

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Year 2: Conducted fish stock assessment in 8 sites (Plus 1 which was for the newly-established MPA) 	At least 8 sites	(+) 1 site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted monitoring of sea turtle nesting areas in 29 sites 	At least six (6) sites monitored	(+) 23 sites monitored
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted assessment of mangrove areas in 10 sites 	10 sites	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted inventory of giant clams in 10 sites 	8 sites	(+) 2 sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation/study conducted on the migratory pattern of whale sharks and dolphins 	1 Study	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 community members mentored to be capable of conducting the community-based trainings (11 women and 14 men) 	At least 20 community members	(+) 5 Community members

II.2.2.4. Objective 4: To organize and strengthen community-based organizations towards improving their participation in environmental governance and enhancement of their coastal resource management practices

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Target Output	Variance
Under Component 4: Organize men and women fishers for pro-active engagement in environmental and social governance		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 fisherfolk organizations have gender responsive vision, mission, goals, policies, systems, and plans 	At least 25 organizations	(+) 3 organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 fisherfolk organizations proactively engaged in coastal resource management 	At least 25 organizations	(+) 3 organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 fisherfolk organizations maintained at least 35% women-to-65% men membership gender ratio 	At least 25 organizations	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,363 women involved in resource management 	At least 1,000 women	(+) 363 women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 municipal fisherfolk federations or coalitions engaged in municipal-wide advocacy 	4	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Councils (MFARMCs) reactivated 	4	-
Under Component 5: Capacitate local resource managers		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 215 fishers (94 women and 121 men) trained on manta tow survey or snorkel survey from 5 communities 	At least 75 men and women	(+) 140 persons
	At least 3 communities	(+) 2 communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted basic ecology training/orientation in 15 communities 	15 communities	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained 57 community, NGO and LGU representatives on marine mammals identification and rescue (24 women and 33 men) 	At least 50 individuals	(+) 7 persons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained 30 community, NGO and LGU representatives on wild clams identification (14 women and 16 men) 	At least 25 individuals	(+) 5 persons

• Conducted leadership trainings for 17 people's organizations	At least 15 organizations	(+) 2 organizations
• Representatives from 12 people's organizations trained on livelihood management	12 organizations represented	-
• 17 communities provided with gender sensitivity training	15 communities	(+) 2 communities
• 34 persons (11 women and 23 men fishers) deputized as new fish wardens	At least 35 men and women	(-) 1 person (Failed to pass qualifying exam)
• 43 individuals (19 women and 24 men) deputized as wildlife enforcement officers	At least 35 men and women	(+) 8 persons
• 53 local resource managers (18 women and 35 men) participated in a paralegal training	At least 40 local resource managers	(+) 13 persons
• 155 fishers (24 women and 131 men) got involved in law enforcement activities as fish wardens and/or wildlife enforcement officers	At least 115 men and women	(+) 40 persons
Under Component 6: Provide technical assistance for strengthened law enforcement		
• Technical assistance provided and sustained to community members for patrolling activities in municipal waters of the four (4) partner municipalities	Assistance provided	-
• Decreased the intrusion of commercial fishers and illegal fishing activities by 85%	75%	(+) 10%
• 36 stakeholders/representatives (5 women and 31 men) from the four (4) partner municipalities participated in the law enforcement forum conducted	At least 45 stakeholders	(-) 9 persons (only 36 attended despite confirmations of participation)

II.2.2.5. Objective 5: To develop Romblon Passage Integrated Marine Corridor Management and synergize management and enforcement efforts of the four municipalities

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Target Output	Variance
Under Component 7: Institutionalize coastal resource management (CRM) practices in local government unit (LGU) development plans and policies		
• Consulted stakeholders in the 4 municipalities concerning the Romblon Passage integrated marine corridor management	4 municipalities	-
• An Integrated Romblon Passage Coastal Resource Management Plan developed and implemented	1 plan	-

II.2.2.6. Objective 6: To institutionalize Coastal Resource Management in the development plans and policies

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS	Target Output	Variance
Under Component 7: Institutionalize coastal resource management (CRM) practices in local government unit (LGU) development plans and policies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted multi-sectoral consultations in 2 municipalities regarding delineation of municipal waters 	2 municipalities	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal waters of 2 municipalities delineated (The municipal waters of the other 2 municipalities have already been previously delineated) 	2 municipalities	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 municipal/<i>barangay</i> (village) fishery related ordinances or resolutions passed 	At least 6 fishery related regulations	(+) 15 regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 women and 27 men leaders from the 4 partner municipalities trained on conflict management and resolution 	4 municipalities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed/updated the fisherfolk advocacy agenda in 4 municipalities 	4 municipalities	-

Of the entirety of the target outputs or deliverables listed above, the Program effectively delivered better than 95% on all of the items. The Program’s shortcomings in the “number of giant clams restocked in MPA sites¹²”, the “number of deputized new fish wardens¹³” and the “number of representatives that participated in the law enforcement forum¹⁴” were, practically, out of its control. It is admittedly in the “number of direct household beneficiaries with increased income as a result of the supplementary livelihood projects/business enterprises provided” that the Program fell short of its planned target (174 out of 200) even as the number of planned livelihood projects of 10 was met. This can be explained in part by the implementing local community organizations identifying themselves their members who can take part in the livelihood project/business enterprise based on internally agreed upon criteria or requirements. This meant that not all the members may qualify as direct beneficiaries of the project and this to an extent took away from the projected number of beneficiaries.

II.2.3. Performance Target Indicators

The Romblon Passage Program established a set of eight (8) performance target indicators composed of five (5) United States Government (USG) set of common indicators for Natural Resources and Biodiversity to measure program progress and three (3) custom indicators that the implementers have developed to provide additional measures of program performance and also management information for the Program toward achieving the planned results per specified Program component. The indicators selected allow for measurements across the Romblon Passage as well as for disaggregation by the four partner municipalities (see Annex B).

¹² Restocking remaining giant clams in the wild was no longer sensible based on required criteria.

¹³ One candidate fish warden failed to pass the qualifying test administered by BFAR.

¹⁴ Invitees confirmed their participation but still were not able to attend for various reasons.

II.2.3.1. Indicator 1: Number of hectares under improved natural resource management as a result of United States Government (USG) assistance

“Improved management” for Indicator 1 refers to meeting established natural resource management benchmarks for management effectiveness such as CRM plans that are formally adopted and implemented, annual LGU budget allocation for management activities, boundaries of municipal waters delineated, formal establishment and/or recognition of the resource management unit/s, functional Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils (MFRAMCs) or similar organizations, some level of fisheries/environmental law enforcement operations, and active awareness campaign through information, education and communication activities. “Improved management” includes activities that promote and/or maintain current efforts at coastal resources management at the municipal level as well as the integration of the four (4) municipalities’ coastal resources management efforts along Romblon Passage.

Management should be guided by a participatory process for planning, decision-making and implementation following principles of sustainable natural resources management (NRM), improved human and institutional capacity for sustainable NRM and conservation, access to better information for decision-making, and/or adoption of sustainable NRM and conservation practices. For the Romblon Passage Program, areas (hectares) of “combined municipal waters” refer to areas comprised of the municipal waters of the four (4) partner municipalities along and across Romblon Passage measured using the legal definition of marine waters 0 to 15 kilometers from the coastline, and coastal and marine resource areas but exclude Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nestling areas that may be under other fishery management jurisdictions and/or resource management bodies/units that are counted in Indicator 2.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	92,544.25 ha	92,544.25 ha	100%
San Agustin	21,799.05 ha	21,799.05 ha	100%
Sta. Maria	14,714.59 ha	14,714.59 ha	100%
Calatrava	21,073.83 ha	21,073.83 ha	100%
TOTAL	150,131.72 ha	150,131.72 ha	100%

II.2.3.2. Indicator 2: Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance

“Improved management” in areas of biological significance for Indicator 2 refers to meeting established natural resource management benchmarks for management effectiveness. Meeting established effectiveness measures means the management conforms to accepted standards or

protocols which may include: a management body/unit established and functional, boundaries demarcated and enforcement in place, a monitoring and evaluation system in place, and other appropriate measures. “Improved management” includes activities that promote and/or maintain current efforts at natural resources management at the municipal level as well as the integration of the four (4) municipalities’ natural resources management efforts along and across Romblon Passage for the objective of conserving biodiversity in areas identified as biologically significant through local legislation and/or national or local management processes.

Management should be guided by a participatory process for planning, decision-making and implementation following principles of sustainable natural resources management (NRM), improved human and institutional capacity for sustainable NRM and conservation, access to better information for decision-making, and/or adoption of sustainable NRM and conservation practices. For the Romblon Passage Program, areas (hectares) of “biological significance” refer to Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries or marine area/s with a strong likelihood of being designated as an MPA by 2013, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nestling areas. These areas are within key biodiversity areas which were identified through participatory eco-regional, national and local assessments and prioritization processes with expert guidance.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	127.60 ha	154.67 ha	121.21%
San Agustin	27.00 ha	44.06 ha	163.18%
Sta. Maria	15.00 ha	15.00 ha	100%
Calatrava	66.00 ha	70.50 ha	106.81%
TOTAL	235.56 ha	284.23 ha	120.66%

II.2.3.3. Indicator 3: Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource and conservation as a result of USG assistance

“Economic Benefits” for Indicator 3 refer to benefits and revenues arising from new and/or expansion of community-based livelihood projects/enterprises or activities that are strategically planned and created leading to livelihood diversification and ultimately, to lessened pressure on the natural resources along and across Romblon Passage. These projects/enterprises will be selected based on the following criteria: environment-friendly technologies/practices, high social/community acceptability and number of community members able to participate and benefit.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	80 pax	71 pax	88.75%
San Agustin	40 pax	31 pax	77.50%
Sta. Maria	40 pax	48 pax	120%
Calatrava	40 pax	24 pax	60.00%
TOTAL	200 pax	174 pax	87.00%

II.2.3.4. Indicator 4: Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation

Indicator 4 indicates the number of individuals participating in learning activities intended for teaching or imparting knowledge and information on natural resources management and biodiversity conservation with designated instructors, mentors or lead persons, learning objectives, and outcomes, conducted fulltime or intermittently. This includes formal and non-formal training activities, and consists of transfer of knowledge, skills or attitudes through structured learning and follow-up activities, or through less structured means to solve problems or fill identified performance gaps. Training can consist of long- or short-term non-degree technical courses in non-academic seminars, workshops, on-the-job learning experiences, observational study tours, or distance learning exercises or interventions. Subject areas include: Resource Assessment and Monitoring, Basic Ecology, Sea Turtle Management, Organizational Development, Environmental Laws and Law Enforcement, Fish Warden Deputation Training, Livelihood Enterprise Management, and other training activities relevant for natural resources and coastal/marine management and conservation in Romblon Passage.

Municipality	2-Year Targets		Accomplishment as of end-Program		% of Target Achieved	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Romblon	50	75	463	449	926%	598%
San Agustin	30	45	454	260	1,513%	577%
Sta. Maria	30	45	183	157	610%	348%
Calatrava	68	102	148	103	217%	100.9%
Other Municipalities	0	0	0	9	-	-
TOTAL	178	267	1,248	978	701%	366%

II.2.3.5. Indicator 5: Number of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance

Policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements in Indicator 5 include those formed and formally endorsed by government, non-government, civil society, and/or private sector stakeholders with the intent to strengthen sustainable natural resource management. These include policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements between and among municipalities and the province for the purpose of co-management of coastal and marine resources.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	18	19	105.55%
San Agustin	5	14	280%
Sta. Maria	5	10	200%
Calatrava	8	11	137.50%
TOTAL	36	38	105.55%

II.2.3.6. Indicator 6: Number of sectoral groups involved in natural resource management as a result of USG assistance

The number of groups involved in natural resources management in Indicator 6 refers, but is not limited, to non-government, civil society, people’s organizations, youth organizations, schools and learning institutions, and/or private sector stakeholders regularly participating in NRM and biodiversity conservation activities. These activities may include stakeholders’ meetings, participatory resource assessment and monitoring, coastal clean-ups, mangrove planting, marine mammal rescue, trainings, and awareness campaign.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	18	18	100%
San Agustin	6	6	100%
Sta. Maria	5	5	100%
Calatrava	7	7	100%
TOTAL	36	36	100%

II.2.3.7. Indicator 7: Number of information, education and communication (IEC) materials produced as a result of USG assistance

Information, education and communication (IEC) materials for indicator 7 include posters, billboard signage, primers, and children’s workbooks developed and distributed to raise awareness and general public support for the rehabilitation and management of Romblon Passage, the maintenance of MPAs, mangrove forests and sea turtle nestling areas as well as the protection and conservation of marine mammals. These IEC materials will focus on the promotion of mangrove, sea turtle, and marine mammal protection and conservation as well as on the identification and management of giant clams.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	469	769	164%
San Agustin	153	486	317%
Sta. Maria	153	385	251%
Calatrava	155	389	250%
TOTAL	930	2,029	218%

II.2.3.8. Indicator 8: Percent increase in local investments for coastal resource management

Indicator 8 refers to “local Investments” for coastal resource management as any cash or in-kind contribution by both public and private sectors to activities intended to strengthen sustainable natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation.

Municipality	2-Year Targets	Accomplishment as of end-Program	% of Target Achieved
Romblon	10% of PhP460,000 = PhP46,000	PhP630,000	1,370%
San Agustin	20% of PhP250,000 = PhP50,000	PhP295,248	590%
Sta. Maria	10% of PhP250,000 = PhP25,000	- PhP150,000	- 600%
Calatrava	20% of PhP400,000 = PhP80,000	PhP300,000	375%
TOTAL	14.78% of PhP1,360,000 = PhP201,000	PhP1,075,248	534.95%

Table 4. Summary of Achievements of the Performance Indicator Targets

Indicator No.	Intermediate Result	Results Statement	Indicator	Unit of Measure	Cumulative 2-Year Targets*	Accomplishment
1	IR 1	Improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems crucial for the conservation of Romblon Passage	No. of hectares under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance	Hectares	150,131.72	150,131.72
2	IR 1	Improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems crucial for the conservation of Romblon Passage	No. of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance	Hectares	235.60	284.23
3	IR 1	Improved marine habitats and coastal ecosystems crucial for the conservation of Romblon Passage	No. of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource management and conservation as a result of USG assistance	In number	200	174
4	IR 2	Empowered community-based organizations for spearheading and championing integrated resource management	No. of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation	In number	445 (178 F, 267 M)	2,226 (1,248 F, 978 M)
5	IR 3	Institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms	No. of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance	In number	36	38
6**	IR 2	Empowered community-based organizations for spearheading and championing integrated resource management	No. of sectoral groups involved in natural resource management as a result of USG assistance**	In number	36	36
7**	IR 3	Institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms	No. of information, education and communication (IEC) materials produced as a result of USG assistance**	In number	930	2,029
8**	IR 3	Institutionalized integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms	Percent increase in local investments for coastal resource management**	Percentage	14.78% (14.78% of the cumulative Php1,360,000.00 baseline is Php201,000.00)	79.06% (79.06% of the cumulative Php1,360,000.00 baseline is Php1,075,248.00)

* Baseline is as of February 2011 for all targets and is assumed to be zero except Indicator No. 8. ** These indicators are custom indicators.

III. Assessment of Accomplishments Against Program Objectives

Rehabilitating marine habitat of Romblon Passage

The objective of rehabilitating the marine habitat of Romblon Passage was anchored on primarily two main themes; (a) the conservation, protection and rehabilitation of the biophysical natural resources that comprise the various ecosystems of the Passage and (b) decreasing the pressure that these resources and ecosystems absorb that are of anthropogenic origin.

Included in the first are the key activities of marine protected area (MPA)/fish sanctuary management and mangrove rehabilitation and management. In terms of former, the Program satisfactorily managed eighteen (18) MPAs covering 229 hectares with the eighteenth one the planned newly-established marine sanctuary. There were actually three (3) proposed sites for the establishment of the new MPA, Bgy. Paroyhog in the Municipality of Sta. Maria, Bgy. Talisay in the Municipality of Calatrava, and Bgy. Binongaan in the Municipality of San Agustin which was the eventual site where the 18th MPA was established. The two other proposed sites, however, remain committed and resolute in their request for SIKAT to assess the suitability of their respective sites as MPAs. At the conclusion of the Program, Bgy. Paroyhog was continuing with its *barangay* (village) consultations while Bgy. Talisay has already obtained a municipal resolution requesting SIKAT to proceed with the underwater resource assessment.

As all these MPAs are no-take zones, the combined impact of the aggregate 18 MPAs is huge in conserving and protecting the remaining live coral reefs. The safe refuge of MPAs provide the necessary time and space for corals to spawn and for the existing coral cover to grow and expand. The two fundamental benefits of MPAs are the speeding up of coral recruitment and propagation and the fish spill-over effects that positively redound to the volume and quality (size and kinds of commercially desired species) of fish catch. An increased fish catch by 20% was achieved based on focus group discussions conducted by the Program with local fisherfolk and various stakeholders including small-scale commercial fishing operators.

In the key activity of mangrove management, the Program slightly surpassed its target output to reforest 9.37 hectares of mangrove areas with an accomplishment of 10.66 hectares. More significantly, the target of conserving and protecting 9.73 hectares of old-growth and secondary growth mangroves was far exceeded with an actual accomplishment of 55.23 hectares protected. Likewise, the target of maintaining two (2) multi-species mangrove nurseries was topped with the Program maintaining seven (7) of these nurseries that catered to 67,212 mangrove seedlings/propagules during the two year implementation.

To address the pressure and burden that the Passage's resources and ecosystems absorb due to anthropogenic stress, the Program's key strategy was to provide alternative and supplementary livelihood/business enterprises to ten (10) local community organizations. While the Program did meet the target of 10 such livelihood projects/business enterprises, even as surpassing the target number of communities/organizations and individuals trained on feasibility studies and business planning and management, it failed to meet the target number of 200 household beneficiaries whose income would have increased as a result of the livelihood

projects. The Program was only able to muster 174 household beneficiaries or 87% of the planned target output. Hence, for this objective, all target outputs were accomplished (see section II.2.2.1.) save for the number of livelihood project beneficiaries.

Engaging multi-sectoral groups in the protection and management of threatened and endangered marine species

The accomplishments for this objective proved more than sufficient against the planned target outputs of the Program. A vital strategy for the activities under this objective was to solicit the active participation of local communities in implementing the management approaches as well as creating public-wide interest and “buzz” in vulnerable marine species such as the sea/marine turtle. Judging by the number of local communities and individuals that got involved and took part in trainings held, management plan workshops conducted and monitoring activities carried out, the strategy seemed to have worked well and translated to the delivery of target outputs.

The local community response to the awareness and education campaign of the Program regarding vulnerable species like the sea turtle, giant clams, dolphins, whale sharks, and sea cows has been remarkable. By bringing attention to the state of these creatures, both globally and locally, and the fate they usually suffer because of ignorance, the Program was able to raise the appreciation of these endangered marine species by the local communities. Twenty-two (22) communities from the four partner communities have integrated a sea/marine turtle management plan into their respective community resource management plans and fifteen (15) have adopted the two-year giant clams management plan formulated during the giant clams identification and management training and workshop. And by conducting marine mammals conservation planning workshops with local resource managers and relevant stakeholders from the four partner municipalities, a 3-year marine mammal conservation plan (specifically for dolphins and whale sharks) was developed and eventually integrated into the CASAMARRO IFARMC plan for the management of Romblon Passage.

Based on threat reduction assessment (TRA) during the conduct of an inter-municipal evaluation, the threat to marine mammals have also been lessened by 80%. The correct prohibition of the use of purse seines and ring nets within Romblon Passage (and indeed within the municipal waters) have eliminated almost 100%, if not completely, the incidence of dolphins and whale sharks being caught by such commercial fishing operations. Local awareness of the documentation studies of the possible migration pathways of marine mammals have also made fisherfolk and coastal communities conscious of recording and reporting sightings of these creatures to relevant local authorities.

According to the assertion of various stakeholders in the same TRA, the illegal harvesting of giant clams have been decreased by 80%. Whereas giant clams used to be observed being openly sold in wet markets before the Program commenced, they are now protected in fish sanctuaries and MPAs where 124 of these bivalves have been restocked from the wild. Restocking was done to not only protect but also increase the chances and speed of fertilization once spawning occurs. While the target was to restock 200 wild giant clams inside marine protected areas, results of area scanning and wild giant clams inventories done from August to October 2012 indicate that there was no longer a significant number of giant clams

suitable for restocking. Giant clams found were those that were already securely embedded in corals and those inhabiting depths of 25 feet or more and the guidelines for restocking prescribe that, under such circumstances, the giant clams are not to be collected and disturbed anymore. While there were giant clams observed outside marine protected areas and on the outside fringes of coral reefs, it was decided that the restocking of these giant clams inside MPAs was no longer desirable given the circumstances. The stock of giant clams in the wild should not be compromised just to meet the target output. The restocking seemed no longer necessary, at least for the time being.

It should be noted that the improved law enforcement along the Passage that the Program also engendered has deterred a lot of illegal activities from being carried out, thus for the most part been responsible for the enhanced protection of threatened and endangered marine species. Equally important has been the partnership building that the Program promoted to obtain support for the local efforts from other like-minded groups on the local, national, even international, level. The resource persons/advisers that have been tapped to facilitate several of the capability trainings were acknowledged experts in their respective fields. Local resource managers have also been supported to attend and participate in some national and international seminars and events to expose them to new ideas and best practices in resource management, broaden their perspectives and boost their confidence and morale in the local work they were doing.

The support of other private sector groups (e.g. youth sector, religious sector, women sector) was very encouraging and instrumental in bringing the issue of protecting and managing vulnerable marine species into the mainstream. With the emergence of such consciousness, sharing of ideas and experiences transpired that led to exchanges of good practices and important information. For example, children playing along the shorelines were usually the first ones to eagerly report sightings of stranded/injured sea turtles to fish wardens or *barangay* (village) officials. It also became widely known that a local fisherfolk organization in Bgy. Agpanabat in the island of Romblon has been operating and maintaining a sea turtle rescue center for some time already, what with the organization hosting study tours of local public schools to educate the youth on sea turtles. The exposure of other groups to Agpanabat has, to a degree, contributed to the decision to also put up a sea turtle rescue center in the Municipality of Sta. Maria in the island of Tablas. Another one is planned to be established in the Municipality of San Agustin as well.

Establishing local coastal resource management

The strategies for achieving this objective hinged on undertaking technical researches that produced science-based evidence and on building capacities within and transferring technology and know-how to local communities that could continue and sustain providing support to the fisherfolk organizations, coastal communities, local government units and other stakeholders.

Underwater resource surveys were done in ten (10) sites utilizing the photo transect survey method for coral assessment and fish visual census for fish stock assessment. For each time that an underwater survey was conducted, six (6) transect lines inside the MPA and six (6) transect lines outside of the MPA were used. For coral assessment, a photo of the reef/continental

shelf/oceanic zone/benthic zone corresponding to every half-meter of the 50-meter transect line was taken such that there shall be 100 shots for each transect line.

In processing the pictures taken, five (5) points were overlaid over each picture (one near each corner and one at the middle) resulting in 500 data points for each transect. The coral (live, dead, dead with algae or rubble), benthic life form attribute, seagrass or abiotic component coinciding with each of the 5 data points in every photo was recorded and afterwards tallied. The totals for all six transects inside the MPA site, as well as all six transects outside, give the statistical approximations of the coral cover for inside and outside the MPA respectively. Each total is an aggregation of the combined 3,000 data points of six transect lines.

Fish visual census on the other hand is taken by the SCUBA diver every 5 meters along the fifty-meter transect, taking note of fish species/family, estimate quantity, and relative size 2.5 meters to the left and right of the transect line. Indicator fish species, particularly those belonging to the family of parrot, surgeon and rabbit fishes, are likewise carefully observed.

Nine (9) of the ten (10) had each been assessed twice (once per year) during the life of the Program, providing each a 2-year data set where photo transect survey method were utilized (These sites have been assessed previously using line intercept transect or LIT. The shift to photo transect survey method was made as this method is regarded as the more efficient method in terms of time spent for fieldwork, that is, being underwater. This is particularly important given the erratic tide and current conditions in Romblon Passage. The preferred method also allows for a review of the scoring done and provides a very good documentation of the survey assessment conducted in the form of the pictures taken). While the period of a year in-between assessments is very short, the 2-year data sets now provides the baseline for future assessments. The change in coral cover and fish stock from Year 1 to Year 2 also gives an indication of a possible trend and of necessary immediate interventions. Since the shift to the new method, coral cover in the 9 sites on the average have slightly increased by half a percent while fish abundance of indicator species have gone up by an average of 4.4%. One MPA site was newly-established in Year 2 and brought the total to 18 the number of partner MPA sites. The lone survey conducted for it was actually the one undertaken to evaluate its suitability as an MPA site. All in all, nineteen (19) underwater surveys were conducted by the Program.

Twenty-nine (29) observed nesting sites of sea/marine turtles were also documented and mapped by the Program. The number of eggs laid eggs and eventually hatched were documented and relayed to PAWB-DENR. Ten (10) MPA sites where wild giant clams were restocked were documented and marked and an annual inventory detailing the measurements of the restocked clams was likewise kept. Furthermore, ten (10) mangrove rehabilitation sites were mapped using global positioning system (GPS) coordinates.

The generation of science-based data has helped establish the activities and efforts of the Program as credible if not legitimate. The use of technological advancements in obtaining accurate figures and measurements (e.g. GPS device) has eliminated ambiguity in areas like law enforcement especially in determining the extent and limits of municipal waters during sea patrolling operations. This has also verified the precise area of mangrove forests and fish sanctuaries/MPAs. Data integrity has raised the acceptance of the resource management

mechanisms by the local government units and communities. The facts and figures resulting from the technical researches and surveys of the Program serve as the foundation and basis for local planning and policy processes.

The trainings, workshops and mentoring that the Program has done for key local community and fisherfolk organization leaders have resulted in an informal core group of local trainers capable of conducting the community-based trainings that the Program has initiated. Twenty-five (25) trainers shall collectively serve as the human resource pool for advancing the cause of sustainably managing and utilizing Romblon Passage. Not only have this group served as trainers for other communities in the four partner municipalities, as was the case when it provided sea turtle management orientation in the expansion area of the Municipality of Calatrava, it has even conducted the training for local resource managers in the neighboring Municipality of Looc.

Organizing and strengthening community-based organizations for environmental governance

The accomplishments in this objective are undeniable as the main areas where the Program consistently performed and performed well were in the fields of organizing and capacity building for resource management.

While the target output called for only twenty-five (25) fisherfolk organizations to be supported, the Program guided and assisted twenty-eight (28) fisherfolk organizations full time with an additional eight (8) so-called service areas given support as well. All 28 organizations have vision, mission and goals that are reflective of their staunch environmental principles and sustainable use viewpoint. They have been undergoing organizational development (OD) mentoring from the Program and this has produced groups that are committed to natural resource management and advocacy work to promote sustainable resource utilization and management mechanisms. All of these organizations were actively engaged in coastal resource management and have integrated their own resource management program within the framework and operations of their organizations.

Four (4) municipal fisherfolk federations (one per partner municipality) were established and were engaged in municipal-wide advocacy for local fisheries development and the sustainable use and management of marine resources in Romblon Passage. Likewise, the respective municipal fisheries and aquatic resources management councils (MFARMCs) of the four partner municipalities have all been reactivated by the Program to be at the forefront of the call for coordinated efforts at managing Romblon Passage. This was very significant considering that the Fisheries Code mandated that MFARMCs be the legitimate bodies in municipalities abutting municipal waters to assist in the preparation of a municipal fisheries development plan, recommend the enactment of municipal fishery ordinances to the local legislative council, and assist in the enforcement of fishery laws and regulations in municipal waters among other things.

The Program provided various trainings and workshops for different stakeholders like local government officials, local fisherfolk organization leaders and members, fish wardens and

wildlife enforcement officers, coastal community dwellers, the youth and students, women and concerned private individuals. The primary goal was to build the capacities for resource management locally and eventually hand over that exact task completely.

The different trainings conducted by the Program were those on (a) marine mammal identification and rescue, (b) wild giant clams identification and restocking management, (c) manta tow and snorkel survey assessment, (d) basic ecology, (e) leadership, (f) gender sensitivity and violence against women and children (VAWC), (g) livelihood management, (h) sea turtle management, (i) organizational development, (j) conflict management and resolution, (k) coral identification, (l) seagrass identification and assessment, (m) paralegal procedures, (n) feasibility study and business planning, (o) financial management for livelihood projects, (p) law enforcement, and (q) the use of a global positioning system (GPS) device.

Consistent with the tenet of gender equality and responsiveness that the Program espoused, the key role women played in resource management activities were rightfully highlighted. Beyond maintaining the 35% female-to-65% male gender ratio in all partner fisherfolk organizations, the Program actively promoted the representation of women in all resource management bodies established by or with the assistance of the Program. One local women organization, Agnay Aware, has enjoyed the support of the Program and has been made the model on the rationale for women-managed areas that the Program pushed to be included in the amendment of the old municipal fishery ordinances of the four partner municipalities. Perhaps as a reward, the Program enjoyed the participation of 1,363 women in various resource management activities during its two-year course.

In terms of capacity building for law enforcement, thirty-four (34) individuals were deputized as new fish wardens by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) under the Program that brought the total number of fish wardens to 155. Meanwhile, forty-three (43) were certified and deputized as wildlife enforcement officers (WEOs) by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) of the DENR that increased their ilk to 77. There was also a total of fifty-three (53) individuals who participated in the paralegal training arranged by the Program.

The Program also held a law enforcement forum that was attended by thirty-six (36) stakeholders /representatives from the four (4) partner municipalities. This forum provided the impetus for drafting of enforcement plans and strategies that was endorsed to CASAMARRO IFARMC.

Since the Program started, the composite team of members from the Philippine National Police-Maritime Group, the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) of the local government units, the *bantay dagat* or fish wardens and the people's organizations managing MPAs formed to do the regular sea patrolling duties, there have been more than two-hundred thirty individuals apprehended and fined for various infractions including those that involved nine (9) commercial fishing boats encroaching on municipal waters. The campaigns to inform and educate the public and deter further illegal activities have also resulted in the cooperation from unexpected groups like one large scale commercial fishing vessel that provided marker buoys to mark the 15-kilometer boundary of the municipal waters of Romblon.

Developing Romblon Passage integrated marine corridor management

The development of an ecosystem-based integrated marine corridor management of Romblon Passage was primarily done through an inter-LGU alliance among the four partner municipalities whose combined and shared municipal waters comprise the desired management unit within the Passage. This inter-LGU alliance however would not have been possible if not for the groundwork done with local fisherfolk organizations and concerned stakeholders whom the Program heavily consulted and coordinated with to create the type of environment that would render the as local government units receptive to the idea of shared responsibility and shared management.

Numerous consultations among stakeholders in the four partner municipalities were facilitated by the Program to introduce the concept of an inter-LGU alliance for an integrated approach to the management of the Passage. The Program and its partners worked hard setting the stage for both the top-down and bottom-up tracks to finally converge and realize the superior benefits of an integrated system of management especially for this particular case where the management unit is easily shared by the constituents of all four municipalities and where the sharing, distribution or spill over of the bounty or devastation of the natural resource, or the effects thereof, is seamless and unencumbered.

The management body took the form of an integrated fisheries and aquatic resources management council (IFARMC) as prescribed by the Fisheries Code for waters bounded by two or more municipalities. The Calatrava, San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Romblon Integrated Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council or the CASAMARRO IFARMC was made official in November 2011 for the shared management, protection and rehabilitation of Romblon Passage. Commitment from the abovementioned local government units was evident in their respective support of the IFARMC, with each local chief executive serving as member of the IFARMC Executive Board and formalizing said commitment by signing a Memorandum of Agreement that was the basis for the management structure created. The MOA also enjoyed the support of the Provincial Governor and the House Representative of the Province of Romblon as both personally attended and witnessed the signing of the Agreement.

In the months that followed, the Program guided the development and the process of drafting the Integrated Romblon Passage Coastal Resource Management Plan with local partners. This endeavor yielded resulted in both a three-year plan and a more detailed one-year plan that were eventually adopted and approved by the IFARMC. The initial operational budget of the new management body came from the contributions of the four LGUs (PhP50,000.00 per LGU). The four local chief executives have also pledged to include in the preparation of their respective annual budgets their yearly contributions to the IFARMC.

Institutionalizing coastal resource management in the development plans and policies

The institutionalization and mainstreaming of an ecosystem-based management of Romblon Passage in local development plans and policies were principally done through forging an inter-

LGU alliance among the four (4) partner municipalities whose combined and shared municipal waters make up the desired management unit. The management body takes the form of an Integrated Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (IFARMC) as prescribed by the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 and this was created through a Memorandum of Agreement among the 4 municipalities. This Memorandum provided the management structure of what is called the Calatrava-San Agustin-Sta. Maria-Romblon (CASAMARRO) IFARMC.

With the assistance of the Program, the technical working committees of the IFARMC and the four respective MFARMCs (whose reconstitution and reactivation was set in motion and facilitated by the Program, as it did for numerous equivalent councils in the *barangay* level called the BFARMCs) crafted a three-year plan and a more detailed one-year plan that embodied and laid out the thrust and programs that the IFARMC wanted to implement for the conservation, protection, rehabilitation and management of Romblon Passage. Included in the agreement was the commitment of regular annual contributions of each of the member LGUs of the IFARMC to the latter's operational budget. The IFARMC is presently securing authorization from the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) for the issuance of official receipts to the member LGUs on their contributions while a trust fund account has been already set up.

The institutionalization of integrated resource management philosophies, strategies and mechanisms were also done at the community level aside from the LGU track. The number of policies, resolutions and agreements created at the *barangay* (village) level is evidence of this. It is also recognition of the critical role that people's organizations and communities play in the actual implementation, popularization and building of a critical mass conscious of integrated resource management approaches. This was critical because the realization of the idea of people participation in governance espoused by Republic Act 7160 or the the 1991 Local Government Code (LGC) of the Philippines still mostly obtains its desire and motivation from the citizenry alone. Even now, few are local government units that spearhead such movement on their own initiative.

The empowerment of local organizations and communities opened the doors for them to have the necessary determination and support to actually engage in the different legislative processes and provide their inputs to local development plans and programs. The gains in natural resource management have been significant and extensive. In consonance with the creation of CASAMARRO IFARMC, the involvement of local fisherfolk organizations (together with the urging of the Program) have practically brought to life the regular sea patrolling along the Passage and have resulted in the creation of the Romblon Pass Coastal Law Enforcement Team (RP-CLET), a composite team of law enforcers from the Philippine National Police Maritime Group and the Philippine Coast Guard, deputized fish wardens, representatives of the Municipal Agriculture Office, and volunteers from fisherfolk organizations. A 3-year enforcement plan has been formulated to guide the team's operations and activities.

The increased "presence" from local groups have compelled concerned government offices and authorities to, at the very least, do their due diligence on matters such as holding public hearings and consultations. In step with identifying champions and doing lobby work with local executives and legislators, local people's participation played a major role in garnering support for the approval of pertinent amendments to the respective municipal fishery ordinances of the

municipalities of San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Calatrava (Romblon's fishery ordinance had already been amended and updated into a comprehensive municipal fishery ordinance or CMFO prior to the start of the Program). It was also largely responsible for the net increase of the LGU yearly budget for coastal resource management (CRM) in the two years of program implementation.

The enhanced skill set and boost in confidence have made local fisherfolk leaders very active in various development discussions and networks. The municipal fisherfolk federation of Romblon, *KAPAMILYA* Inc., was identified as the civil society organizations (CSO) representative of the municipality in the Local Poverty Reduction Alleviation Team (LPRAT) program of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC). The representatives' role is to endorse the formulated LPRAT plan of the municipality, ensuring that the plan addresses and prioritizes the urgent needs of the town and its people. Without the endorsement, the LPRAT plan will not be funded by the national government (through NAPC). *KAPAMILYA* Inc. also sits as a member of the Provincial Development Council and in September 2012 integrated the sea turtle management plan in the provincial budget allocation under CRM for 2013.

The respective nominations of the MFARMC Chairpersons of San Agustin and Romblon as the Regional Fisherfolk's Representative Director and National Fisherfolk's Representative Director respectively in the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) are significant highlights that should likewise be mentioned. In general, the exposure and involvement of local leaders and resource managers in external fora and caucuses bring in opportunities. The networks that they made linked them to other groups that had available resources they tapped into. An example was the five local communities that benefited from BFAR's mangrove program, where half of the fund provided was allotted for the implementation of their respective mangrove management plans. One organization also received support for the fry and feeds of its semi-intensive fish pond.

Noteworthy were the inclusion/integration of the marine mammal conservation plan and sea turtle management plan into the municipalities' 3-year CRM plans. *Barangay* resolutions were crafted to adopt the marine protected are (MPA) management plans of local community organizations even as the *barangay* of Balogo in Calatrava approved a *barangay* ordinance calling for mangrove protection and conservation of its mangrove areas. Meanwhile, the Municipality of San Agustin incorporated provisions for mangrove protection into its amended comprehensive municipal fishery ordinance. Also, *Sitio*¹⁵ Cahuyong in Bgy. Ginablan was declared as a Mangrove and Bird Sanctuary through an ordinance by the Municipality of Romblon.

The Memorandum of Agreement entered into by the municipalities of San Agustin and Sta. Maria with the Parks and Wildlife Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (PAWB-DENR) stipulated, as a matter of legal obligation, that the municipalities adhere to the marine turtle conservation action plan (MTCAP) developed by the Program and partner local communities contained in the agreement. A very positive result was the construction and establishment of a sea turtle rescue center in Sta. Maria while another one is in the pipeline for San Agustin.

¹⁵A territorial enclave that forms part of the *barangay* (village).

IV. Key Lessons

The Romblon Passage Program experience has presented numerous situations and settings from which important lessons may be gleaned. And by taking cognizance of attendant aspects existing and/or occurring contemporaneously, a better understanding of the factors that contributed to the success or shortcomings of the program implementation can be grasped.

On Improving Marine Habitats and Coastal Ecosystems

- **Data Integrity Must Be Supported By Science; Is Paramount To Planning, Decision-Making and Awareness Campaign** – The determination of baseline data and information at the start of the program must be in a manner that is credible and, as much as possible, science-based. In a lot of information gathering processes like surveys, key informant interviews and focus group discussions that are mostly employed for obtaining social data and assessment, a level of statistical validity must still be observed. For example, certain measures must be taken to ensure that the sources of information are representative of the particular population being surveyed.

For technical studies or resource assessments where scientific methods and tools are available and may be suitably applied, all avenues must be exhausted to make sure that such methods and tools are taken advantage of. Data and records from these scientific studies are more universally and more easily accepted because the methods used to acquire them are proven methods. There is integrity and certainty in what the data shows and implies that translate to well-informed and sound decisions. This provides confidence to resource managers, decision-makers and campaigners to have more conviction in promoting and implementing their recommendations and action plans.

The partnerships with academic and learning institutions and acknowledged experts contribute a lot to the “science” of the methods and the verity of facts and figures. The approach to identifying and managing giant clams, for example, was prescribed by Dr. Hilly Ann Roa-Quiaoit of the Xavier University McKeough Marine Center. The strategy to managing marine mammals was largely facilitated by Dr. Lemnuel Aragonos of the University of the Philippines Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology, the co-convenor of the Phil. Marine Mammal Stranding Network (PMMSN). The conduct of underwater coral and fish survey assessments were joined and supported by a faculty of the Romblon State University (RSU). RSU was also a major partner in the management and rehabilitation of mangrove forests.

The dispute over the limits and boundaries of the adjacent municipal waters of San Agustin and Calatrava was a very good instance of how critical data integrity could be. It took a geophysicist from the Hydrography Department of the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA), Engr. Mario Princer, conducting a training on the delineation/delimitation of municipal waters using a handheld GPS receiver and supervising and reviewing the actual municipal water coordinates gathered at sea during the field validation exercise to finally put to rest any contention the stakeholders from either side may have had.

- **Improve Natural Resource Management By Utilizing Indigenous Knowledge And Enhancing Local Technical Capacity** – Indigenous knowledge is often underappreciated when it should be treated as a source of valuable and insightful information. This kind of knowledge is vastly informed by experience and is certain to be very much appropriate/applicable to the local setting if not thoroughly specific. The combination by complementation of indigenous knowledge and local technical competence and skills works wonders for how local members of communities can be better equipped to sustainably use and manage their surrounding resources.

The bottom-up track of the “top-down and bottom-up” approach arguably represents the process of ensuring that the primary stewards of the natural resource are on board and committed to the resource management cause. It was the local communities that were doing the heavy lifting and pushing; directly the ones planting mangrove trees, monitoring sea turtle nesting sites, guarding marine protected areas and keeping an eye on whether commercial fishing boats have encroached on municipal waters, undertaking underwater resource assessments, etc. They were able to do all these things effectively because their capacities and skills have been enhanced through various trainings, workshops and mentoring. The existing indigenous knowledge they had had been encouraged and its use properly guided resulting to positive measures and interventions.

For the key activity of mangrove rehabilitation and management, the Program by and large trained local community members on the identification of mangrove species by their scientific names to match the known local names. Orientations and trainings were also provided on the proper collection, handling, bagging and planting of mangrove propagules and seedlings. In the process of removing the seedling bag after the seedling has been planted, however, it was an observation that has long been held by a local organization, the Ginablan Fisherfolk Association (GIFA), which informed the technique of the bag removal that minimizes seedling mortality rate.

Only the bottom portion or “catchment” of the bag was to be removed in the same instance that the seedling is planted in the ground. The sides of the bag that is like an encircling wall to the seedling and the soil in which it was initially planted should remain and be left behind. This simple technique maintains the firmness and stability of said soil around the seedling while allowing the roots to set in and become established in the earth. The remaining part of the bag was to be removed only about a week later to ensure that the seedling has already safely taken root. Of course, this makes the task of mangrove planting more laborious but the trade-off is well worth it when one thinks about what in fact is the objective of the task.

Another local knowledge or technique that community members in Bgy. Ginablan employ in the planting of mangroves is the unique way of positioning the support stick or pole (usually a twig/branch of a small piece of wood) that is bore into the ground next to the mangrove seedling. The latter is tied to the former, the purpose being to make sure the seedling keeps upright even through tidal surges that might cause it to get covered by or even buried in the mud. The support sticks are not drilled vertically but rather at a slight angle to the ground with its top end facing away from the sea.

Experience have informed Bgy. Ginablan that this way of planting the support sticks breaks the waves more effectively thus providing better protection for the seedlings. This simple concept has been shared by a partner fisherfolk leader at a Philippine Locally-Managed Marine Area (PhiLMMA) convention.

- **Longer Period And Focused Attention Needed For Fisherfolk To Acquire And Develop Unfamiliar Skills** – The Program’s alternative and supplementary livelihood component was the most problematic and arguably the area where the shortcoming was biggest. While the planned ten (10) community projects were met, the Program failed on the target number of direct household beneficiaries of 200, having delivered only 174.

It was difficult for the local fisherfolk organizations to establish livelihood projects or business enterprises primarily because it was hard for them to ascertain the marketing analysis portion of the required feasibility study/business plan of their project proposals. Despite several workshops conducted to instruct on this matter as well as the mentoring sessions, the common perspective simply derived from their experience in selling their catch to ambulant fish vendors waiting for them at the shores and fish stall vendors in the wet market. Because the Program did not want this opportunity to turn into dole-outs, the proposals were carefully scrutinized and evaluated in terms of the soundness of the viability and profitability, a process that unexpectedly prolonged the start of implementing the projects.

In hindsight, a staff could have been assigned to focus full time on supporting and guiding the organizations in their business planning. Community organizers were also the ones monitoring the development of the proposals even as technical experts were contracted out to intermittently facilitate the seminar workshops and some mentoring. For a program component as important as this, the Program, with the advice and guidance of a full time livelihood staff, could have “relaxed” on its scrutiny of the marketing flow and allowed trial runs on limited basis/coverage to test actual viability (which was subsequently done with the proposals later submitted).

The requisite business plans are of course critical, but to expect fisherfolk to produce these technical documents in such a short period did them a disservice resulting in “simpler” enterprises like operating and managing rice retailing stores and wet stalls. These projects are not in any way “inferior” projects, the bottom line after all is for organization members to make profit and earn additional income. However, the nature of the operations of these types of projects also limited the number of direct household beneficiaries, otherwise the resulting profit share by each member would be too insignificant to compensate for their trouble.

- **Partnership Building Is Vital For Success; Should Not Be Limited To Like-Minded Groups** – Establishing partnerships effectively increases and expands the Program’s reach, coverage, influence, resources and the sources of ideas, strategies and possible solutions/measures to undesirable circumstances. There are groups and organizations that will be natural and obvious candidates for such partnerships by virtue

of sharing common interest, area of operations or target constituents. Religious groups, women, youth and elderly organizations, academic/learning institutions, and a lot of civil society organizations as well are often included in this set. Indeed, the Program has managed well in coordinating and working well with these groups. In terms of performing the different key resource management activities, these groups form part of the warm bodies together with the fisherfolk.

Romblon State University (RSU) was a key partner in underwater survey assessments. It was also very involved in mangrove rehabilitation activities, as were the youth sector of the Alternative Learning System (ALS) of the Province, the Philippine National Police and Philippine Coast Guard, the religious sect *Inglesia ni Cristo*, and the women's group Provincial Women's League of Romblon (PWLR). PWLR was also the main partner in the trainings on gender sensitivity and violence against women and children. The government agency PAWB-DENR had formal agreements with the municipalities on sea turtle protection and conservation while BFAR, DOLE, DTI, TESDA and DOST all provided support for the livelihood projects of several of the local communities.

There are also factions or sectors with which partnerships would be unlikely yet proved to be workable. The group of small-scale commercial fishers (*Samahan ng mga Pangulong ng Romblon* or SAPARO) were appreciative of the gesture that they were invited by the Program to relevant fora and workshops where the discussions focused on fisheries management within municipal waters and amendments to the municipal fishery ordinances. Because their issues were also given consideration, these fishers became more open to dialogue and cooperation. By being inclusive, the strategies and efforts for resource management gain more supporters especially since in this case, the fish workers on the commercial fishing operations also reside in the four partner municipalities of the Program.

On Empowering Community-Based Organizations

- **Community Organizing Still A Most Crucial Approach and Process To Sustain The Empowerment of Communities** – Community organizing still remains the most potent strategy in terms of individual and collective human resource development at the grassroots/community level. In capacitating and harnessing human capacities of local communities, the approachability, interest and accessibility of individuals and groups equally rest on the inclusivity, flexibility and “patience” of the organizing component as they do on the system structure and content of the program. The provision of and eventual benefits from trainings and capacity building activities need to be guided by the organizing in order for not only enduring behavior change but also unity of purpose. There must be shared values and principles that steer the use of the acquired knowledge and technical skills in meaningful processes that lead to the desired states, outcomes or conditions.
- **Gender Mainstreaming Gives Community Empowerment a Boost** – In giving separate yet related attention to the women sector of the communities, the program embraces inclusivity while at the same time improving both the level of local

participation and the quality of the human capital. By tapping the unique capabilities, skill set and distinctive instinct of women, the whole community benefits from the expanded source of knowledge, ideas and potential solutions to various problems. More than merely doubling the warm bodies for undertaking certain tasks, there is now a different perspective from which to view and analyze situations.

Addressing the issues and concerns of the womenfolk also effectively puts focus on the state of affairs of the elderly and the youth as women more often than not act as the caretakers and representatives of said sectors. These groups, for example, prominently make up the lot who rely heavily on nearshore fishing and shell gathering for food and livelihood, that they should be in the conversation when plan and policies on natural resource management are concerned. The appropriate and correct inclusion of women in the empowerment process gives encouragement to other marginalized groups and individuals to get involved. The gender responsiveness of a program provides confidence that people will have their voices heard and sentiments considered in the discussions of community affairs.

As much as women are the glue that keeps families together, so do they provide a level of stability in their communities. Including them in the equation of truly empowering local communities signifies that empowerment should be manifested in the equal and fair promotion of opportunities, responsibilities and benefits of women and men. As an example, the people's organization Agnay Aware in Bgy. Agnay is an all-women organization that has requested for and awarded the care of the mangrove area of the *barangay*, making it the embodiment of the women-managed area concept that was added as a provision in the Municipality of Romblon's amended comprehensive municipal fishery ordinance. The organization is also successfully running and managing a *sari-sari* (variety) store that provides additional income for its members, proof that given the right opportunity, women make as much contribution to their communities as men if not more.

- **Developing Second-Liners Will Help Ensure Sustainability of Gains** – In order that the successes attained by the community to endure and continue, it is very important that second-liners from within the communities be identified and capacitated. A tricky and usual circumstance encountered is for the older and more senior members of the community to be playing the dominant roles and uneasy to relinquish the responsibilities to younger generations. However, this is precisely the kind of situation where a program should intervene to allow for the next-in-line generation room to grow and opportunities to establish themselves as capable leaders.

As with any group of people, the particular strengths and weaknesses of the member individuals must be recognized so that complementation may be fostered fittingly. The younger members of the community may be more adept and in tune with technology (as was the case with the use of a GPS device where younger individuals were able to grasp more quickly the proper operation of said device) while the more senior ones are most probably wise with experience and indigenous knowledge. Through sharing and cooperation, the collective strengths should more than make up for the weaknesses.

In having second-liners ready to assume the responsibilities and even leadership, the gains in empowering the community is preserved and endures such that the benefits from it may be sustained.

- **Coordinating With The Local Government Units Is A Must** – While the target recipient of the organizing are community-based organizations, people’s organizations and fisherfolk associations and not necessarily the local government units (LGUs), it is imperative that any environmental or social development program coordinate with the relevant LGUs. The reason is not so much to obtain legitimacy or even accreditation (but these do help a lot) from LGUs as to make them partners in the community empowerment process. By involving the LGUs, the community benefits from not just one but two benefactors that are now working hand in hand. Another significant aspect of establishing a good relationship with the LGUs is that they potentially could serve as the permanent continuance of the program. The program may also even tap into resources that may only be available in LGUs.

Especially vital is the involvement of the *barangay* council, the smallest political unit in the Philippine government system and also its most directly connected to and immersed in local community state of affairs. In this sense, the *barangay* is, more than any other LGU, likely to act immediately and directly on the concerns of its community. It is also privy to knowledge and information that are specific to the community and its local environs, making them the appropriate authority to work with and consult.

Engaging the *barangay* council also indirectly holds the *barangay* officials accountable to the community in terms of the provision and delivery of services that the program is trying to establish. Yet more than the accountability, *barangay* officials share a kinship with community members because they belong to the same community and equally benefit or suffer from the state of their surroundings and the resources found therein. As the community is very much within its actual limited area of jurisdiction, the *barangay* is more likely to be concerned and interested in community members being provided various opportunities to improve their quality of life through the process of community empowerment.

On Institutionalizing Integrated Resource Management Philosophies, Strategies and Mechanisms

- **Doing Natural Resource Management Requires Engaging In Local Policy Development** – To ensure that efforts targeting resource management do not just go to waste or, worse, negated by counterproductive measures originating from other strategies and mechanisms in the social development field, champions, advocates and resource managers must engage in the local policy discussions. This would often entail doing considerable amount of lobbying with local executives, legislators, planners and other decision-makers. The dilemma is that lobbying requires a different skill set such that a program may need to identify individuals whose personality traits are ideal for the role of a lobbyist and likewise closely mentor key leaders who inevitably would be

drawn either willingly or reluctantly into undertaking this necessity.

By establishing a presence in local policy processes and in the local development councils or assemblies, the agenda for natural resource management would always be in the conversations. This is the opportunity to negotiate for much-needed resources to be allocated, say, in the yearly budget preparation of the municipality. It is also a way to create awareness among and educate the policy and decision makers on the state of the Passage and the dire need for its protection and rehabilitation.

The “fruits” of the labor need not be in the form of direct resource management financing or the implementation of plans and interventions. The provision of general livelihood support such as the fish processing training of the DOST or the shared facility project of DTI for fisherfolk organizations indirectly boost resource management by adding value to and prolonging the shelf life of marine resource-derived food products. The participation of a municipal federation as the civil society organization representative to the Local Poverty Reduction Alleviation Team (LPRAT) program of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), for example, guarantees that at the very least, the proposed LPRAT projects of a municipality will not have detrimental effects on resource management mechanisms.

- **Identify A Champion For Your Cause** – Very much related to local communities and organizations’ participation in local legislative processes earlier mentioned, an identified champion may serve as the liaison and spokesperson for the program’s resource management advocacy in both official government assemblies and informal discussion meetings. A member of the local legislative body is an ideal champion but well-regarded members of the community have also been known to be effective champions as well.

There is wisdom in finding champions among the technical and professional staff of the government bureaucracy. To start with, these individuals have more permanence than elective officials thus making them longer-term agents of change. Secondly, they are the ones who actually do the leg work and provide the facts and analyses that are utilized as the basis for decisions. They have a high appreciation of the realities and more often than not display a strong motivation to seek and advocate for long-term remedies rather than palliative ones because of how invested they are in their work and the regularity with which they encounter resource management scenarios, as well as, the stakeholders. The technical proficiency of these professionals lend credence to the cause of resource management because they are recognized experts in this particular field.

- **Institutional Capacities Must Be Enhanced and Institutional Arrangements Must Be Formalized For Environmental Governance To Be Realized** – If building up the technical capacities of local communities embody the bottom-up track of the “top-down and bottom-up” approach, enhancing the institutional capacities represent a major part of the top-down track. This pertains to developing the existing expertise through additional skills trainings, transfer of technology (either the

proficiency to use technology or perhaps some provision/turn-over of equipment), study tours, mentoring/workshops by acknowledged experts and exchange programs, and linking to other capable organizations, institutions and networks from whom they can ask for further guidance and support.

A substantial share of increasing institutional capacities necessarily entails lodging the knowledge and competence with the professional staff and technical people. The goal here is to create a tribe of like-minded individuals within institutions who will provide a rational perspective on resource management to counter other views and opinions that may be for political expediency alone.

The creation of the CASAMARRO IFARMC exemplify the kind of institutional arrangement that may be necessary in order to bring about actual environmental governance. Through the formalization of the IFARMC, with its own structure, declaration of policy, operational units, functions and powers, and budget among other things, the actuation of governance has secured a legitimate platform from where a tangible implementation of governance mechanisms and resource management strategies may be demanded.

As an offshoot of the IFARMC, the Romblon Pass Coastal Law Enforcement Team (RP-CLET) is likewise a kind of institutional arrangement among the mother organizations of the different members that comprise the team; the Philippine National Police Maritime Group, the Philippine Coast Guard, the Municipal Agriculture Office, the group of deputized fish wardens, and the local fisherfolk organizations. Much like the other operational units of the IFARMC, this composite team formalizes the law enforcement component of the management of the Passage and is the clear and instantly recognizable authority mandated to perform the tasks exactly under said component.

The reactivation of the individual MFARMCs and the build up of the technical capability of the Municipal Agriculture Office were also essential undertakings in improving the capacities for environmental governance of existing institutions. The organizing of local fisherfolk associations and eventually municipal fisherfolk federations were similarly strategies to foster institutional arrangements, this time at the grassroots level. With the opportunities provided by the Local Government Code for people's participation in governance and policymaking processes, local community-based organizations and civil society groups have become even more central and valuable institutional partners.

- **Walking The Walk: Translate Commitment And Plans Into Action By Putting Local Investment For Resource Management** – Literally, “putting money where your mouth is” depicts how government offices demonstrate their commitment to a cause, program or undertaking. Relative to local community-based organizations, fisherfolk associations and nongovernmental organizations, the local government unit is the party most likely to have the resources, or at least the opportunity, to allocate a definite budget for resource management. The level of local investment that a local government unit makes shows how serious it is in actually implementing resource management plans and programs.

Generating local investments for resource management should not be limited to the budget that an LGU will/can allocate. Other capable groups, such as chambers of commerce and industry, business clubs, resort and dive shop owners, tourist tour operators, and commercial fishing operators, should be encouraged to make investments in the natural resource that contributes extensively to their businesses. There were many occasions that contributions both from the government and the private sector were in-kind, and these should also be acknowledged and promoted. The obligatory ingredient for a far-reaching, municipal-wide resource management program, however, remains to be a committed budget from the LGU.

V. Summary of Factors That Affected Program Implementation

The introduction of Romblon Passage Program was facilitated by the good working relationships that the implementing organization had established with the respective local government units of Romblon, San Agustin and Sta. Maria. The rapport the Program enjoyed even from the initial stages of implementation results from the effective organizing that SIKAT has done with the local fisherfolk associations in previously carried out projects and programs. The entry to the expansion area of the Municipality of Calatrava did not encounter resistance despite questions early on about what the Program's intentions were and how the fisherfolk constituents of the town would in fact benefit. Suffice it to say that the good reputation and decent track record of the implementing organization reflected well on the new Program even as endorsements from those SIKAT had already worked and partnered with in the past offered additional sources of confidence.

The "top-down and bottom-up" approach of the Program engaged simultaneously the LGU and grassroots levels. As has been mentioned, organizing played a big role in generating awareness and conversations at the community level even as local organizations were provided technical capacity building and guidance in their organizational development process. In the latter, the Program evaluated the people's organizations (POs) to see whether there might be a need to restructure or reorganize the group. There were cases where the PO was inactive because of failure in leadership or simply the loss of interest among members, and the Program patiently persevered to help the organization sort such matters out. In the process, the Program earned more than the goodwill of the community but also its trust.

At the other end of the approach spectrum, the Program enjoyed the strong support of the local chief executives including that of the Governor and the Lone Representative to Congress of the Province. It helped a lot that whatever political animosity there was between and among the concerned local chief executives, if any, was kept to a minimum and did not reflect on the undertaking of establishing the IFARMC. Maybe things were made easier because it was only the Mayor of Calatrava who belonged to a different political party at the time of program implementation. It seemed like the fact that the Mayor of San Agustin and the Congressman were siblings (who were in good terms, for there are a lot of warring relatives in Philippine politics) also helped solidify the support for the Program.

The support of the local government did not end at the municipal level. The collaboration, recognition and cooperation of the *barangay* council very much played a major part in the

process and efforts to empower the communities as well as to execute resource management activities at the community level. In fact, several underwater survey assessments scheduled in March 2011 (to take advantage of the calm seas and the good weather of the summer season), near the commencement of the Program, had to be postponed while the *barangay* councils concerned review the draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) planned between them and the Program. In another instance, the *barangay* councils provide the legal instrument in the form of a *barangay* resolution for the awarding of the stewardship/management of the marine protected areas (MPAs) situated in their *barangays* to the POs. If the backing of the *barangay* is gained, the *barangay* officials also help a lot in knocking on the doors of the municipal government to obtain resources and to serve as champions of a program's advocacy.

As mentioned, entering into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with a government entity is always advisable in order to have a written document or instrument that clearly states and defines the powers, functions and obligations of the contracting parties. This is one means of establishing accountability and measuring the performance of the list of tasks that has to be carried out. Nonetheless, there should be considerable foresight and time allowance in the execution of the MOA especially when this involves government personalities and offices.

The draft MOA between PAWB-DENR and the Municipalities of San Agustin and Sta. Maria were finalized in the third quarter of the calendar year 2012, with all parties having agreed to sign. Originally scheduled for an August 2012 signing ceremony, several rescheduling were done as various circumstances affected the respective availabilities of the signatories. Finally, the MOA was just signed and exchanged between parties without any ceremonial proceedings in December 2012. However, the delay had already affected the conduct of the training and deputation of wildlife enforcement officers (WEOs).

Another key activity that was delayed was the conduct of underwater survey assessments. Year 1 of implementation went rather smoothly in terms of completing the year's targets for coral cover and fish stock assessments of the MPAs. Year 2 though presented quite a challenge in conducting the surveys as the frequency of typhoons postponed and canceled most of the scheduled assessments during the first half of the calendar year 2012, with the first five months supposedly the ideal period owing to the nice, sunny weather and smooth current. But Year 2 was characterized instead by inclement weather and squally currents even on those months and have made underwater survey too risky. Thus, the underwater assessments were only completed in the no-cost extension period of the Program.

Lastly, the use of science and scientific methods in gathering data and in establishing/presenting ideas and concepts, interdependency and relationships in nature, models, and strategies should be the standard and not the alternative whenever applicable and available. Scientific data convincingly showed the actual state of the marine environment to the various stakeholders because the method/s for obtaining the information was largely unassailable. Combine this with having the real technical experts personally presenting the data, giving the trainings and facilitating workshops and the focus shifts almost automatically on how to remedy the situation and away from distrusting the facts and figures.

The Program was able to gather support as a result of having credible data. The technical trainings provided to communities as well as LGU staff were very much anticipated because the

Program made it a point to explain the science behind the concepts, methods and strategies that were being shared and instructed. By having science provide the guidance and by deferring to the works of acknowledged scientists, professionals and experts, the Program established the integrity of the processes and mechanisms in managing natural resources.

A crucial element in the Program's use of science and scientific methods is the participatory nature of the data gathering, assessments and even analysis. It created not only a better understanding of the data and the scientific process but also ownership of the results. The participatory approach produced enthusiastic acceptance and vigorous support among stakeholders.

VI. Sustainability of the Gains of the Program

The Program addressed the matter of sustainability to varying degrees on several areas. In the process of performing the planned tasks/activities and in the delivery of desired outputs, the following items contribute to the sustainability efforts of the Program:

Partnership and Alliance Building. The Program successfully established partnerships with different local, national and even international organizations and networks. More importantly, the local program partners were deliberately introduced to these networks such that they now have separate and direct associations with these entities especially in times when they might need assistance. This opens up access to opportunities where local organizations may further enhance their capacities and possibly obtain financial support too.

Governance. The Program organized and strengthened a wide-ranging variety of local organizations such as fisherfolk organizations and municipal federations, women's groups, the fisheries and aquatic resources management councils (FARMCs), fish wardens, and wildlife enforcer officers (WEOs) in which members of the local community may get actively involved and take part in the people's participation aspect of governance. Together with the organizing, the Program boosted the confidence and the skills of key leaders to engage in lobbying work and participate in local development planning process. As what has transpired shows, a municipal fisherfolk federation now sits as the civil society organization (CSO) representative to the Local Poverty Reduction Alleviation Team (LPRAT) program of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) for the Municipality of Romblon.

Institutional arrangements such as that of the Calatrava-San Agustin-Sta. Maria-Romblon Integrated Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (CASAMARRO IFARMC) should outlast elective officials and continue to lead the way in managing the marine resources of Romblon Passage. Accordingly, its operational units like the Romblon Pass Coastal Law Enforcement Team (RP-CLET) should be able to maintain its present level of operations and carry on with its law enforcement duties along the Passage. The reactivation of the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council (MFARMCs) of the four municipalities will also ensure that fisheries management and environmental protection of marine resources are always looked after.

The Organizational Development (OD) Team among the fisherfolk leaders that the Program established and mentored should continue to provide continuing support to the other grassroots organizations. The management and operational systems set up among partner CBOs should make it easier for them to maintain the robustness of their organizations.

Through the efforts of the Program, the respective municipal fishery ordinances of San Agustin, Sta. Maria and Calatrava were also successfully amended. These three municipalities now have approved comprehensive municipal fishery ordinances (CMFOs) (Romblon had already Passed its CMFO previously prior to the Program). This is very significant considering the amendments incorporated provisions that strengthens resource management initiatives and further gives preferential rights to marginalized municipal fisherfolk among other things.

Financing. The Program, through the establishment of the CASAMARRO IFARMC, has effectively institutionalized the yearly budget allocation for coastal resource management (CRM) activities along Romblon Passage from the annual contributions of the four member municipalities. As for the individual CRM fund of these municipalities, the strong presence of fisherfolk organizations should compel the LGUs to include in their allocation a reasonable budget. Lobbying work and advocacy must continue to ensure that LGUs remain resolute in their commitment to conserve, protect and rehabilitate the marine habitat and ecosystems within the Passage.

A percentage of the penalties and fees collected from fishers in violation of the municipal fishery ordinance is used for resource management activities like sea patrolling, maintenance of marine protected areas and mangrove rehabilitation. User's fee/rent for tourism use in marine protected areas has also been enforced and part of the revenue are used to finance resource management-related activities too. The livelihood projects/ business enterprises that were funded by the Program also set up management systems where a portion of the income/revenue shall be used in sustaining the organizations and financing their priority programs.

Technology Transfer. The Program have trained a multitude of people on various topics like Basic Ecology, Seagrass Identification and Assessment, Sea Turtle Management and Giant Clams Identification and Management. Other trainings that are sure to be very useful were those on mapping and use of a GPS device (especially for the determination of the exact location at sea of fishing boats during sea patrolling operations), manta tow survey, coral identification, and the process of doing underwater coral and fish survey assessment. For the last one, the Program selected local community members and have them trained and certified by as licensed SCUBA divers by an established diver training organization. There is now a pool of six local divers that are capable to and have participated in the conduct of underwater survey assessments. With the capability to monitor the status of critical marine resources in this times of the climate change phenomenon, data collection can be sustained locally and the information gathered should continue to inform the planning process of resource management as well as the setting up of necessary mitigating measures and adaptation mechanisms to minimize climate change effects.

The effectiveness of the capacity building component of the Program can also be seen in the field of law enforcement. Thirty-four (34) and forty-three (43) individuals respectively were deputized as new fish wardens and wildlife enforcement officers (WEOs) even as fifty-three (53) local

resource managers were given paralegal training. The constant guidance and assistance of the Program to the sea patrolling operations and the planning workshops of the different law enforcement groups define how the transfer of knowledge and skills were carried out throughout the two year implementation period.

The partnership with Romblon State University (RSU) is one channel by which the knowledge and experience gained, especially in using scientific methods for data collection and in applying appropriate techniques in resource management activities, can be preserved and put to good use for years to come. It is also expected that the Provincial Women's League of Romblon (PWLR) will continue to hold gender sensitivity trainings and orientations on the Magna Carta of Women beyond the confines of the four partner municipalities. The sharing and distribution of the Program's training modules, primers and other information, education and communication (IEC) materials to relevant offices in the LGUs, schools and community organizations help spread not just the knowledge but the advocacy, and hopefully the awareness created a profound and lasting impact among stakeholders that moves them to act on their own initiatives even after the Program has concluded.

Climate Change Community Adaptation Measures. The Program was able to deliver on its planned strategies to help communities lessen and cope with the impact of climate change. Gene banking was accomplished through the maintenance and establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) and fish sanctuaries. The network of eighteen (18) MPAs along Romblon Passage, when effective management is maintained, will increase the rate of coral recruitment and coral cover while providing a haven for fish species to reproduce and grow in size. In suitable MPA locations, giant clams from the wild were restocked to help in their spawning by providing an undisturbed environment safe from individuals illegally gathering the clams.

Seven (7) multi-species mangrove nurseries were put up where all thirteen (13) endemic mangrove species were accommodated. This made sure that all species were maintained despite the occurrence of strong typhoons and the onslaught of tidal surges. Damaged mangrove areas may be rehabilitated using the appropriate species because these are readily available in the nurseries. Through the campaign that stressed the significance of mangrove forests in giving coastal communities protection from violent tides and wind gusts, the conservation of the old growth mangrove areas and the reforestation efforts that the Program initiated are expected to continue.

Local communities have been educated on sea turtle management, and management plans were put in place in localities known to be nesting areas. Provided in this plan is the proper handling and transfer of sea turtle eggs laid in perilous areas and shores that are susceptible to tidal changes and sea water rise. Procedures for releasing hatchlings back into the water were also taught and likewise mentioned in the sea turtle management plan. Two (2) rescue centers (with one also being a hatchery) have been maintained, with another one planned to be established.

The livelihood projects/business enterprises that the Program encouraged and supported were projects that also addressed the issue of food security especially among the poor coastal communities. Projects such as fish drying/processing and semi-intensive fish pond should make food and food products available in the island even during the monsoon season and during

instances when the province is cut off from the mainland because of rough sea conditions brought about by typhoons. The supplementary income for fishers will help tide them over in these times when it is not possible or too risky for them to go out and fish.

The sustainability issue is, in general, addressed by two central elements: (a) the capacity building that the Program has extensively done, demonstrated by the training of local trainers and the struggle for a critical mass for the resource management cause, and (b) the institutionalization of not just capacity too, but of structures, policies and programs. The CASAMARRO IFARMC, RP-CLET, the reactivated MFARMCs, the fish wardens groups and WEO units exemplify structures while the CMFOs and the various MOAs represent the policy aspect. The local adoption of the many management measures like the conservation and protection of sea turtles and giant clams, the rehabilitation of mangrove areas and the maintenance of MPAs are examples of programs.

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

In two years and three months of program implementation (which includes the three-month no-cost extension of the Program), Romblon Passage Program contributed significantly to the rehabilitation and conservation of the coastal and marine resources of the Passage by employing integrated community-based coastal resource management strategies and mechanisms. The Program effectively engaged coastal communities and pertinent stakeholders from the four (4) target partner municipalities for effective integrated resource management, capacity building and empowerment of local communities and organizations, and the institutionalization and mainstreaming of resource management strategies in development plans, structures and policies.

Through the capacity building activities, the knowledge and technical competence of local resource managers were greatly enhanced. Coupled with the awareness and IEC campaign for environmental conservation and rehabilitation, a strong public support was generated that further tweaked the interest in the trainings and resource management activities that were being provided, resulting in sometimes overwhelming number of individuals wanting to participate in the trainings and workshops. The capacity building component, in this sense, has succeeded in kick starting and getting the process of reaching a critical mass for the resource management initiatives underway.

In the establishment of the CASAMARRO IFARMC, the partner LGUs have created an enduring institutional arrangement by which their plans, programs and resources for the rehabilitation and protection of Romblon Passage can be coursed through. With a mandate to do exactly that, the IFARMC has more authority and leverage in directly implementing strategies aimed at managing the marine resources of the Passage while at the same time be held accountable for the satisfactory performance of its duties and functions.

The prohibition of commercial fishing operations within municipal waters has vastly improved the status of coral reefs and fish stock along the Passage even as municipal/artisanal fishers benefit enormously with minimized fuel consumption on their fishing boats and increased volume of their catch. The law enforcement aspect of the resource management being

employed in Romblon Passage must continue along with the sustained management of protected areas like fish sanctuaries and mangrove forests. The apparent political will and inter-LGU coordination experienced and seen during the life of the Program must hold and persist if the rehabilitation of coastal ecosystems are to be fully restored. While the gains have been observed and felt, tales and experiences of other places near and far should throw caution to those thinking that the battle has been won.

The collective commitment of local communities, local government units and the many stakeholders of Romblon Passage remains to be seen. Their collective and individual resolve to continue what the Program has started and established will be tested now that the Program has ended. Vigilance among the “frontliners”, the fisherfolk organizations and the champions of environmental consciousness, will have to not only continue but and step up. In the matter of local investment for coastal resource management alone, only one out of the four LGUs has consistently increased its budget allocation in the two years that the Program was implemented. The answer to the question of whether what the Program has delivered and achieved overall is sufficient for all the plans, initiatives, efforts and gains be sustained by local partners is an open-ended one. On the part of the local communities, empowerment may at times be misguided and could often create friction with other groups of stakeholders. Conversely, the engagement with other relevant entities, such as in lobbying, may not be sustained and of course, confidence is fleeting. On the LGU side, plans, programs and funding for resource management may easily be sidetracked with the enormous amount of problems and issues that government officials have to address, not to mention the ever-present political horse trading they have to contend with. The hope is that the successes have been plenty, eye-opening and inspiring for the direct users, resource managers, authorities and all stakeholders to want to keep conserving, protecting, rehabilitating and managing their natural resources in order to reap its bounty.

On Improving Marine Habitats and Coastal Ecosystems

A comprehensive resource valuation must eventually be undertaken to provide further data and information crucial in the analysis, planning and decision making processes that local resource managers make. In the allocation of limited local government budget to countless competing development issues and needs in various areas of service delivery, accounting for the benefits (e.g., value of fish catch, employment maintained and generated, contribution to the local gross domestic product, protection afforded against typhoons and tidal surges) that the natural resources of Romblon Passage give will increase the appreciation for the necessity to conserve, protect and rehabilitate it. In addition, a localized, specific resource valuation of the resources found in the Passage will promote a careful understanding of the potential risk-reward scenarios that may happen from decisions made and will help in coming up with mitigating mechanisms and measures.

A computation of the Passage’s maximum sustainable yield (MSY) should also be undertaken if the CASAMARRO IFARMC were to enforce such measures as open and closed seasons. It is not sufficient that the IFARMC relies on a generalized data graph of the MSY that says that a depth of 1 meter of mangrove area provides about 1,000 kilograms per hectare annually of finfish, shells and shellfish, or that within waters 50 meters from the shoreline, the likely yield is around 360 kilograms of fish per hectare per year. Romblon Passage should have its own MSY given how significant it is as a fishing ground for the province and neighboring regions as well. A

regular, consistent fish catch monitoring should also be in place at all fish landing ports and docks so that a reliable historical data of such a vital type of information can be established.

For a province that is heavily resource-based when it comes to industries and livelihood opportunities of its constituents, better care and management of its natural resources should be a major focus. In the last few years, municipalities of the province have been going into the area of ecotourism to solicit investments and generate local income and employment. Indeed for several of these sixth class, fifth class municipalities, investments for local tourism may be the one legitimate shot at going up through the rungs of the municipal class ladder.

The appeal of putting up beach resorts and recreational shops that cater to water sports and activities (e.g., scuba diving, kayaking, wind surfing, snorkeling) is certainly perfect for a lot of the coastal municipalities of Romblon as the allure of their beaches and seas is just scenic and remarkable. Developments and constructions are currently ongoing and it remains to be seen how the local government units are prepared to protect the integrity of their coastal zones. There should be stakeholders' consultations and discussions on how to effectively put in place a zoning mechanism of the coastal zone in the face of all the developments brought about by the interest and boom in ecotourism and local tourism in general. The capacity building efforts started by the Program should extend to other pertinent offices and groups that shall be involved and engaged in the intensification of developments and activities related to tourism. The local tourism board and/or local tourism office of the LGU and the municipal engineering office as the approving authority for building constructions and the adherence to laws like the building code and water code are but two of the important agencies that should be capacitated and made ready to protect environmental integrity and to uphold resource management strategies.

On Empowering Community-Based Organizations

Local communities and concerned groups like fisherfolk organizations should be provided the necessary knowledge and skills to guide them about true ecotourism concepts and objectives. As was the case in the drive to manage Romblon Passage, the grassroots will play a crucial role in creating awareness about what ecotourism should and should not be. The coastal dwellers will once again be at the frontlines when it comes to "negotiating" with the authorities and the LGUs on how ecotourism goes beyond the local income from business taxes and investments poured in and should in fact emphasize and buttress the protection and resource management aspects.

Trainings and mentoring/guidance on livelihood projects and business enterprise developments should continue for fisherfolk organizations and local community-based organizations. The LGU and/or other groups (e.g., NGOs, CSOs, business groups/clubs) that are operating in the locality should provide encouragement and assistance to POs to continue their efforts to come up, put up, operate, manage and sustain alternative or supplementary livelihood enterprises so that they can raise their quality of life and persist on their quest for self-determination. LGUs should keep on linking them up with other government agencies that can offer both technical expertise and financial support for a startup or even an already existing and running enterprise. The private sector should also share their know-how and resources to help grassroots organizations in their livelihood projects. Areas the private sector may be particularly helpful

with are in the sourcing of raw materials, logistics, marketing and distribution. Proper and enough exposure is needed by these groups for them to be comfortable in a vary unfamiliar territory where their way of thinking may need a paradigm shift and their skills some kind or level of retraining so these can eventually translate to success.

On Institutionalization Of Integrated Resource Management

One very fundamental area in which the cause for responsible resource management can be helped is in the establishment of the Environment and Natural Resources Officer (ENRO) at the local levels. Alas, the excuse most often offered on why this central position is nonexistent in most local government units is that its establishment (and maintenance) is just optional per the provisions of the Local Government Code (LGC). Amending the particular provision will likely be a very lengthy and enormous task, but really, the creation of this office/appointment of the ENRO rests on the LGUs themselves who are permitted by law to do so. While LGUs argue that they do not have enough financial resources to hire an ENRO and maintain the position, the other stakeholders must assert the need for this dedicated officer and compel the LGUs to muster the political will to give priority to making the ENRO a reality. A Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Officer (MENRO) would serve as the focal technical person for the municipality when it comes to concerns about the environment, a prime task that no one among the four partner LGUs of the Program is presently responsible for. Article 14 of the LGC provides the qualifications, powers and duties of the ENRO and these certainly underscore the importance of having one.

Another institutional arrangement that can be improved for a lot of Municipal Agriculture Offices of coastal municipalities not only in the Province of Romblon but throughout the country is to have a fisheries officer or “person” in its staff. Experience have shown that even in localities with fisheries school, the staff attending to fisheries matters at the MAO is not a fisheries person but more often than not an agricultural person. This must change as the vast expanse of municipal waters that have to be managed evidently exceeds the agricultural lands. There is also something to say about the interest, to say the least, in fisheries issues of a non-fisheries person. Obviously, the bigger concern is the technical competence in looking at and addressing said issues.

Eventually, there must be a review and a rethinking of how the so-called internal revenue allotment (IRA) under the LGC is being calculated, distributed and used. Presently, the share of each province, city and municipality in the IRA is determined on the basis of population (50%), land area (25%) and equal sharing (25%). Land area is a crucial basis presumably because it is a determinant of the enormity of the area that an LGU has to oversee and, apparently, develop. The question then is why municipal waters was not identified as a basis given that the LGU also presides over and manages this “area” within its jurisdiction. Unmistakably, the LGC was crafted and enacted earlier, in 1991, than the Fisheries Code of 1998 that defined municipal waters. Now that there is that definition and along with the responsibilities of the LGUs explicitly stated with regard to “the management, conservation, development, protection, utilization, and disposition of all fish and fishery/aquatic resources within their respective municipal waters”, the IRA has to somehow consider how to factor in municipal waters as a basis for its sharing. While this will take a congressional act amending the LGC that is sure to be a much more lengthy and enormous task than having the ENRO be compulsory rather than

optional (for the simple fact that IRA is involved), coastal municipalities has to start the process of lobbying for such a change. This should provide an institutional solution to the chronic problem of the lack of local financial resources to invest and allocate for resource management.

ANNEX A

TABLES

Table 1**List of Partner People's Organizations (POs) Assisted**

Municipality	Barangay	PO Name	Membership		
			Female	Male	Total
1. Romblon	Cobrador	Samahan ng mga Mangingisda Naglalayon ng Sentrong Kaunlaran sa Pangkabuhayan (SAMANASEKAP)	24	30	54
2. Romblon	Alad	Mangingisda ng Alad Layunin ay Alagaan Ang Kabuhayan At Santuwaryo (MALAKAS)	15	24	39
3. Romblon	Logbon	Samahan ng Maliit na Mangingisda ng Logbon (SAMMALO)	8	10	18
4. Romblon	Agtongo	Samahan ng Mangingisda Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Nayong Agtongo (SAMAKANA)	12	18	30
5. Romblon	Lonos	Pagkakaisa ng maliit na Mangingisda ng Barangay Lonos (PAMMBALO)	17	14	31
6. Romblon	Mapula	Mapula United Fisherfolk Association (MUFA)	18	22	40
7. Romblon	Agnay	Agnay Development Program for Aquatic Marine Protection (ADPROMAPI)	24	30	54
8. Romblon	Agnay	Agnay Association of Women's for Action and Response (Agnay AWARE)	45	0	45
9. Romblon	Ginablan	Ginablan FisherFolk Association (GIFA)	16	24	40
10. Romblon	Agnipa	Samahan ng Mangingisda ng Agnipa Romblon (SAMMAR)	10	12	22
11. Romblon	Lunas	Falus Lunas Fish Sanctuary (FALUS)	4	26	30
12. Romblon	Agpanabat	Pamamalakaya at Wastong Ingat Sa Karagatan ng Agpanabat na Nagkakaisa (PAWIKAN)	24	30	54
13. Romblon	Sabluyan	Laban Para sa Ikaunlad ng mga Mangingisda ng Sabluyan (LIMAS)	15	20	35
14. Romblon	Guimpingan	Tanging Yaman ng Guimpingan (TANGIGUI)	12	15	27
15. Romblon	Lio	Pangkabuhayang Samahan ng LI O	10	12	22
16. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Norte	Samahan ng Maliliit na Mangingisda ng Concepcion Norte (SAMMACON)	6	27	33
17. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Sur	Fisherfolk Association of Concepcion Sur (FOCOS)	3	19	22
18. Sta. Maria	Bonga	Sagip Ekolohiya ang mga Mangingisda ng Bonga at Agrikultura (SEMBA)	16	13	29
19. Sta. Maria	Paroyhog	Paroyhog Action for Resources Onward Living (PAROL)	21	10	31
20. San Agustin	Long Beach	Samahang Aagapay sa Grupo Tungo sa Ikaunlad ng Pangisdaan at Pamayanan (SAGIPP)	7	11	18
21. San Agustin	Carmen	Samahan ng Mangingisda ng Carmen (SAMACA)	8	9	17
22. San Agustin	Sugod	Samahan ng mga Makakalikasan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Sugod (SAMAKAS)	14	6	20
23. San Agustin	Binongaan	Samahan ng Mangingisda ng Binongaan (SMB)	15	12	27
24. Calatrava	San Roque	San Roque United Group of Fishers Association (SUGA)	39	35	74
25. Calatrava	Balogo	Lapiang Akma Tungo sa Adhikaing Pangisdaan ng Balogo (LATAB)	42	32	74
26. Calatrava	Talisay	Talisay United Fishers Livelihood and Non-Government Association (TULINGAN)	29	27	56
27. Calatrava	Linao	Sulong Linao Group of Fishers (SULIG)	54	18	72
28. Calatrava	Pangulo	Samahan ng Mangingisda sa Barangay Pangulo (SABALO)	62	31	93

Totals: 570 537 1,107

Table 2**Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)/Fish Sanctuaries with Management Plan**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	MPA Name	Size (Has.)
1. Romblon	Cobrador	TAKOT REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	3.530
2. Romblon	Alad	SOFT CORAL GARDEN FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	3.383
3. Romblon	Logbon	KAN-UGAW REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	16.596
4. Romblon	Agnay	SILANGA REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	15.080
5. Romblon	Mapula	MAPULA FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	5.291
6. Romblon	Ginablan	SAN PEDRO FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	9.177
7. Romblon	Agnipa	ACROPORA GARDEN FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	5.975
8. Romblon	Lunas	PARK FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	3.684
9. Romblon	Agpanabat	APUNAN UNDERWATER CAVE FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	5.887
10. Romblon	Sablayan	UNDERWATER PARADISE FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	0.988
11. Romblon	Li-O	LI-O FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	14.727
12. Romblon	Lonos	LONOS REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	14.313
13. Romblon	Guimpingan	GUIMPINGAN REEF FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	7.703
14. Romblon	Agtongo	AGTONGO ROCK FISH AND MARINE SANCTUARY	12.172
15. San Agustin	Carmen	CARMEN-CABOLUTAN FISH SANCTUARY	26.000
16. San Agustin	Binongaan	BINONGAAN FISH SANCTUARY	8.0
17. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Norte	CONCEPCION NORTE MPA	15.000
18. Calatrava	Balogo	BALOGO MPA	61.500

Total Hectares: 229.006

Table 3**Multi-Species Mangrove Nurseries**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	Number of Mangrove Seedlings Cared For
1. Romblon	Li-O (A)	8,314
2. Romblon	Li-O (B)	5,572
3. Romblon	Ginablan (A)	6,696
4. Romblon	Ginablan (B)	4,638
5. San Agustin	Cabolutan	3,596
6. San Agustin	Sugod	3,800
7. Calatrava	Balogo	34,600

Total Hectares: 67,712

Table 4**Mangrove Species**

	Genus	Species	Common Name/s	Local Name/s
1.	<i>Avicennia</i>	<i>alba</i>	Black Mangrove	<i>Bungalon, Kalapini</i>
2.	<i>Avicennia</i>	<i>marina</i>	Black Mangrove	<i>Bungalon, Kalapini</i>
3.	<i>Aegiceras</i>	<i>floridum</i>	-	<i>Saging-saging na pula</i>
4.	<i>Bruguiera</i>	<i>cylindrica</i>	Red Mangrove	<i>Bakaw puti</i>
5.	<i>Ceriops</i>	<i>tagal</i>	Red Mangrove, Indian Mangrove	<i>Tangal, Lapis-lapis</i>
6.	<i>Excoecaria</i>	<i>agallocha</i> *	Milky Mangrove	<i>Buta-buta</i>
7.	<i>Lumnitzera</i>	<i>racemosa</i>	Buttonwood, White Mangrove	<i>Agnaya</i>
8.	<i>Nypa</i>	<i>fruticans</i>	Mangrove Palm	<i>Nipa, Sasa</i>
9.	<i>Rhizophora</i>	<i>apiculata</i>	Red Mangrove	<i>Bakaw lalaki</i>
10.	<i>Rhizophora</i>	<i>mucronata</i>	Red Mangrove	<i>Bakaw babae</i>
11.	<i>Rhizophora</i>	<i>stylosa</i>	Red Mangrove	<i>Bakaw bato</i>
12.	<i>Sonneratia</i>	<i>alba</i>	Mangrove Apple	<i>Pagatpat</i>
13.	<i>Sonneratia</i>	<i>ovata</i>	Mangrove Apple	<i>Pagatpat</i>

*There are some controversies over the classification of *Excoecaria agallocha* as a true mangrove or as a mangrove associate. Different scientists and experts classify it differently. According to a study done by Liangnu Wang, et al. of Xiamen University, except for leaf osmolality, leaf traits and element accumulation of mature leaves showed it into the ranges of the mangrove associates.

Table 5**Mangrove Areas Reforested**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	Size (Has.)
1. Romblon	Li-O	0.26
2. Romblon	Ginablan	0.17
3. Romblon	Agnay	0.41
4. Romblon	Logbon	1.55
5. Romblon	Lonos	0.10
6. Romblon	Mapula	0.12
7. San Agustin	Cabolutan	0.34
8. San Agustin	Dona Juana	0.66
9. San Agustin	Carmen	0.30
10. Calatrava	Balogo	6.75

Total Hectares: 10.66

Table 6**Areas of Old-Growth Mangroves Protected and Managed**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	Size (Has.)
1. Romblon	Li-O	26.000
2. Romblon	Ginablan	4.032
3. Romblon	Agnay	1.034
4. Romblon	Logbon	5.100
5. San Agustin	Carmen	1.800
6. San Agustin	Sugod	0.610
7. San Agustin	Cabolutan	0.320
8. San Agustin	Dona Juana	0.5012
9. San Agustin	Bachawan	0.297
10. San Agustin	Cagboaya	6.100
11. San Agustin	Dubduban	0.435
12. Calatrava	Balogo	9.000

Total Hectares: 55.2292

Table 7**Implemented Livelihood/Business Enterprises**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	Organization	Project Name	No. of Household Beneficiaries
1. Romblon	Li-O	Lio Mangrove Management Council (MMC)	Semi-intensive Fish Pond	26
2. Romblon	Agpanabat	Pamamalakaya at Wastong Ingat sa Karagatan ng Agpanabat na Nagkakaisa (PAWIKAN)	Egg Retailing	13
3. Romblon	Agnay	Agnay Development Program for Marine & Aquatic Protection Inc (ADPROMAPI)	Eco-tourism	15
4. Romblon	Agnay	Agnay Association of Women for Action and Response – Agnay AWARE	Wet Stall	17
5. San Agustin	Carmen	Samahan ng mga Mangingisda ng Carmen (SAMACA)	Wet Stall	13
6. San Agustin	Long Beach	Samahan Agapay SA Grupo tungo sa Ikauunlad ng Pangisdaan at Pamayanan (SAGIPP)	Smoked Fish	18
7. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Sur	Fisher Folk's Organization of Concepcion Sur (FOCOS)	Rice Retailing	17
8. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Norte	Samahan ng mga Maliliit na Mangingisda ng Concepcion Norte (SAMMACON)	Dried Squid Processing	31
9. Calatrava	Linao	Sulong Linao Group of Fishers (SULIG)	Wet Stall	15
10. Calatrava	Talisay	Talisay United Fishers livelihood and Non-Government Agencies (TULINGAN)	Rice Retailing	9

Total Number of Direct Household Beneficiaries: 174

Table 8**Communities Managing Sea Turtle Nesting Sites**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	No. of Nesting Site
1. Romblon	Cobrador	1
2. Romblon	Agpanabat	3
3. Romblon	Sablayan	3
4. Romblon	Lonos	2
5. Romblon	Logbon	2
6. Romblon	Cajimos	1
7. Romblon	Lunas	1
8. Romblon	Calabogo	2
9. Romblon	Alad	1
10. San Agustin	Binongaan	1
11. San Agustin	Long Beach	1
12. San Agustin	Cagboaya	1
13. San Agustin	Bachawan	1
14. San Agustin	Dubduban	1
15. San Agustin	Sugod	1
16. San Agustin	Carmen	1
17. San Agustin	Hinugusan	1
18. San Agustin	Cabolotan	1
19. Sta. Maria	Bonga	1
20. Sta. Maria	Paroyhog	1
21. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Sur	1
22. Sta. Maria	Sto. Nino	1

Total Number of Documented Nesting Sites: 29

Table 9**Sea/Marine Turtle Inventory**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i>	No. of Eggs Laid/Found	No. of Eggs Hatched/ Hatchlings Released	Species
San Agustin	Cagboaya	59	59	Green Sea Turtle
San Agustin	Binongaan	35	35	Hawksbill Turtle
San Agustin	Binongaan	131	131	Hawksbill Turtle
San Agustin	Binongaan	235	234	Green Sea Turtle
San Agustin	Cabolotan	117	117	Hawksbill Turtle
San Agustin	Dona Juana	92	92	Hawksbill Turtle
San Agustin	Long Beach	89	89	Green Sea Turtle
Calatrava	San Roque	167	167	Hawksbill Turtle
Calatrava	Balogo	107	107	Hawksbill Turtle
Romblon	Agnaga	102	102	Hawksbill Turtle
Romblon	Agnaga	85	85	Green Sea Turtle
Romblon	Calabogo	265	265	Hawksbill Turtle
Romblon	Agpanabat	113	113	Green Sea Turtle
Romblon	Agpanabat	186	186	Hawksbill Turtle
Romblon	Agpanabat	148	148	Hawksbill Turtle

Total Number of Documented hatchlings Released: 1,930

Table 10**Giant Clams Restocked in MPA Sites**

Municipality	<i>Barangay</i> /MPA Site	Species	Quantity
1. Romblon	Mapula	Tridacna Squamosa	18
		Tridacna Maxima	2
2. Romblon	Lunas	Tridacna Squamosa	20
3. Romblon	Agtongo	Tridacna Squamosa	9
4. Romblon	Agpanabat	Tridacna Squamosa	7
		Tridacna Maxima	3
5. Romblon	Sablayan	Tridacna Squamosa	3
		Tridacna Maxima	1
6. Romblon	Ginablan	Tridacna Squamosa	4
7. Romblon	Agnipa	Tridacna Squamosa	3
8. San Agustin	Carmen	Tridacna Squamosa	19
9. Sta. Maria	Concepcion Norte	Tridacna Squamosa	12
10. Calatrava	Balogo	Tridacna Squamosa	6
		Tridacna Maxima	7
		Tridacna Crocea	7
		Hippopus hippopus	1
		Hippopus porcellanus	2

Total Number: 124

Table 11**Partner Municipal Federation/Alliances**

Municipality	Federation/Alliance Name	Acronym	No. of Member Organizations	Primary Advocacy
1. Romblon	Karagatan Aalagaan ng Pederasyon ng Alyansa ng Mnagingisda na Itataguyod and Likas Yaman at Agrikultura ng Romblon	KAPAMILYA ng Romblon	14	Sustainable Livelihood & Engagement of municipal fishers in the management of municipal waters
2. San Agustin	San Agustin Fisher Folks Association	SAFFA, Inc.	4	Sustainable Livelihood & Mangrove Management
3. Sta. Maria	Sta. Maria Alliance of Indigenous Fisher Folks Association	SALIFA, Inc.	4	Sustainable Livelihood & management of Municipal Waters
4. Calatrava	Alliance of Calatrava Fisherfolk Association, Inc.	ACFA, Inc.	5	Engagement of municipal fishers in the management of municipal waters

Table 12**Municipal Waters**

Municipality	Size of Municipal Waters (Has.)	NAMRIA-Verified	Technical Description (GPS Coordinates) Adopted by LGU
1. Romblon	92,544.25	Yes	Yes; in CMFO
2. San Agustin	21,799.05	Yes	Yes; in CMFO
3. Sta. Maria	14,714.59	Yes	Yes; in CMFO
4. Calatrava	21,073.83	Yes	Yes; in CMFO

ANNEX B

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indicator 1. Number of hectares under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance.	Year	Target	Actual
	1	114,343.30	114,343.30
	2	35,788.42	35,788.42

Unit of measure: Hectares

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Target	Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	92,544.25	92,544.25	92,544.25	0	0
San Agustin	21,799.05	0	21,799.05	0	0
Sta. Maria	0	0	0	14,714.59	14,714.59
Calatrava	0	0	0	21,073.83	21,073.83
TOTAL	114,343.30	92,544.25	114,343.30	35,788.42	35,788.42

Definition: "Improved management" refers to meeting established natural resource management benchmarks for management effectiveness such as CRM plans that are formally adopted and implemented, annual LGU budget allocation for management activities, boundaries of municipal waters delineated, formal establishment and/or recognition of the resource management unit/s, functional Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Councils (MFRAMCs) or similar organizations, some level of fisheries/environmental law enforcement operations, and active awareness campaign through information, education and communication activities. "Improved management" includes activities that promote and/or maintain current efforts at coastal resources management at the municipal level as well as the integration of the four (4) municipalities' coastal resources management efforts along Romblon Passage. Management should be guided by a participatory process for planning, decision-making and implementation following principles of sustainable natural resources management (NRM), improved human and institutional capacity for sustainable NRM and conservation, access to better information for decision-making, and/or adoption of sustainable NRM and conservation practices. For the Romblon Passage Program, areas (hectares) of "combined municipal waters" refer to areas comprised of the municipal waters of the four (4) municipalities along and across Romblon Passage measured using the legal definition of marine waters 0 to 15 kilometers from the coastline, and coastal and marine resource areas but exclude Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nestling areas that may be under other fishery management jurisdictions and/or resource management bodies/units that are counted in Indicator 2.

Rationale: Integrated LGU resource management efforts and coordinated institution building supports sustainable management of resources along and across Romblon Passage. The indicator tracks the areal extent over which that is occurring within municipal waters but outside of Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nestling areas.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: The baseline of area within the Program site is based on spatial mapping using a standard protocol and nationally recognized boundaries. "Improved management" will be reported for activities where the USAID-supported program is plausibly linked to the improvements observed. The Program management team will collate data on the baseline of Program areas (ha) and those areas under "improved management". "Improved management" will be determined through the application of locally adopted protocols or criteria (benchmarks) as noted above. Documentation will consist of an Excel spreadsheet that lists the area under improved management with an associated narrative. The data will also include total area (ha) of municipal waters as appropriate to provide context and scale for the areas where interventions are occurring.

Disaggregated by: Municipality

Data source: Program management staff in coordination with pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to the LGUs and/or appropriate local government agencies/offices whose jurisdiction encompass the municipal waters within Romblon Passage, and community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Boundaries plotted on a map and area verifiable through credible data sources.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 2. Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance.	Year	Target	Actual
	1	233.73	233.73
	2	1.87	50.50

Unit of measure: Hectares

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Target	Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	126.23	126.23	126.23	1.37	28.44
San Agustin	26.50	0	26.50	0.50	17.56
Sta. Maria	15	0	15	0	0
Calatrava	66	66	66	0	4.5
TOTAL	233.73	192.23	233.73	1.87	50.5

Definition: “Improved management” in areas of biological significance refers to meeting established natural resource management benchmarks for management effectiveness. Meeting established effectiveness measures means the management conforms to accepted standards or protocols which may include: a management body/unit established and functional, boundaries demarcated and enforcement in place, a monitoring and evaluation system in place, and other appropriate measures. “Improved management” includes activities that promote and/or maintain current efforts at natural resources management at the municipal level as well as the integration of the four (4) municipalities’ natural resources management efforts along and across Romblon Passage for the objective of conserving biodiversity in areas identified as biologically significant through local legislation and/or national or local management processes. Management should be guided by a participatory process for planning, decision-making and implementation following principles of sustainable natural resources management (NRM), improved human and institutional capacity for sustainable NRM and conservation, access to better information for decision-making, and/or adoption of sustainable NRM and conservation practices. For the Romblon Passage Program, areas (hectares) of “biological significance” refer to Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries or marine area/s with a strong likelihood of being designated as an MPA by 2013, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nestling areas. These areas are within key biodiversity areas which were identified through participatory eco-regional, national and local assessments and prioritization processes with expert guidance.

Rationale: Integrated LGU resource management efforts and coordinated institution building supports sustainable management of resources and areas of biological significance along and across Romblon Passage. The indicator tracks the areal extent over which that is occurring within Marine Protected Areas (MPA)/Fish Sanctuaries, Mangrove Forests and sea turtle nestling areas.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: The baseline of area within the Program site is based on spatial mapping using a standard protocol and nationally recognized boundaries. “Improved management” will be reported for activities where the USAID-supported program is plausibly linked to the improvements observed. The Program management team will collate data on the baseline of Program areas (ha) and those areas under “improved management”. “Improved management” will be determined through the application of locally adopted protocols or criteria (benchmarks) as noted above. Documentation will consist of an Excel spreadsheet that lists the areas under improved management with an associated narrative. The data will also include total area (ha) of the management unit in municipal waters and seashore/beach as appropriate to provide context and scale for the areas where interventions are occurring.

Disaggregated by: Municipality

Data source: Program management staff in coordination with pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to the LGUs and/or appropriate local government agencies/offices whose jurisdiction encompass the municipal waters within Romblon Passage, and community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Boundaries plotted on a map and area verifiable through credible data sources.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 3. Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resource and conservation as a result of USG assistance.	Year	Target	Actual
	1	100	0
	2	100	174

Unit of measure: Number of individuals

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Target	Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	60	0	0	20	71
San Agustin	20	0	0	20	31
Sta. Maria	20	0	0	20	48
Calatrava	0	0	0	40	24
TOTAL	100	0	0	100	174

Definition: "Economic Benefits" refer to benefits and revenues arising from new and/or expansion of community-based livelihood projects/enterprises or activities that are strategically planned and created leading to livelihood diversification and ultimately, to lessened pressure on the natural resources along and across Romblon Passage. These projects/enterprises will be selected based on the following criteria: environment-friendly technologies/practices, high social/community acceptability and number of community members able to participate and benefit.

Rationale: Increasing economic benefits to local fishers/women of Romblon Passage through development of supplemental livelihood enterprises are essential aspects of many USAID programs because they enable support for the NRM and/or biodiversity conservation actions and initiatives of the Program.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: Data will be collected using an Excel spreadsheet, with accompanying short narratives (paragraphs) on the details of the economic benefits and revenues that result from the Program assistance.

Disaggregated by: Municipality and Type of livelihood project/enterprise

Data source: Community-based organization's financial reports and profit sharing scheme as well as Program management staff in coordination with pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to the LGUs and/or appropriate local government agencies/offices whose jurisdiction encompass the municipal waters within Romblon Passage, and community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Lists of individuals by gender and livelihood project/enterprise verifiable through credible data sources. Information on follow-up contact with project beneficiaries will be made available.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 4. Number of people receiving USG supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation.	Year	Target		Actual	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
	1	225	150	1,776	2,040
	2	42	28	969	1,248

Unit of measure: Number of individuals

	Year 1						Year 2			
	Target		Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)		Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)		Target		Actual	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Romblon	75	50	186	122	326	206	0	0	449	463
San Agustin	45	30	80	84	279	285	0	0	260	454
Sta. Maria	45	30	52	55	128	137	0	0	157	183
Calatrava	60	40	702	952	1,043	1,412	42	28	103	148
TOTAL	225	150	1,020	1,213	1,776	2,040	42	28	969	1,248

Definition: The number of individuals participating in learning activities intended for teaching or imparting knowledge and information on natural resources management and biodiversity conservation with designated instructors, mentors or lead persons, learning objectives, and outcomes, conducted fulltime or intermittently. This includes formal and non-formal training activities, and consists of transfer of knowledge, skills or attitudes through structured learning and follow-up activities, or through less structured means to solve problems or fill identified performance gaps. Training can consist of long- or short-term non-degree technical courses in non-academic seminars, workshops, on-the-job learning experiences, observational study tours, or distance learning exercises or interventions. Subject areas include: Resource assessment and monitoring, Basic Ecology, Organizational Development, Environmental Laws, Fish Warden Deputation Training, Livelihood enterprise management, and other training activities relevant for natural resources and coastal/marine management and conservation in Romblon Passage.

Rationale: Capacity building for natural resources and environmental management, biodiversity conservation, legislation and policy, and enforcement will be critical to the creation of integrated management mechanisms and effective management of municipal waters, municipal fisheries, Mangrove Forests, MPAs and Networks and adaptation to climate change along and across Romblon Passage.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: Data among municipal fishers will be recorded at each training activity, and combined using an Excel spreadsheet. A short narrative (paragraph) on the types, methodologies and subjects of trainings will be provided. All training data will be submitted through TraiNet of the US Government.

Disaggregated by: Municipality, Gender and Subject Area/Training Topic.

Data source: Program management staff in coordination with pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to the LGUs and/or appropriate local government agencies/offices whose jurisdiction encompass the municipal waters within Romblon Passage, and community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Sign-up sheets that show lists of participants in trainings by day, gender and training subject area/training topic verifiable through credible data sources. Information on follow-up contact with trainees available.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 5. Number of policies, laws, agreements, or regulations promoting sustainable natural resource management and conservation that are implemented as a result of USG assistance.	Year	Target	Actual
	1	29	32
	2	7	22

Unit of measure: Number of local policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Target	Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	16	16	16	2	3
San Agustin	3	6	6	2	8
Sta. Maria	4	4	4	1	6
Calatrava	6	6	6	2	5
TOTAL	29	32	32	7	22

Definition: Policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements include those formed and formally endorsed by government, non-government, civil society, and/or private sector stakeholders with the intent to strengthen sustainable natural resource management. These include policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements between and among municipalities and the province for the purpose of co-management of coastal and marine resources.

Rationale: The formal and informal institutional structures in the form of policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements are essential aspects of many USAID programs because they provide the enabling environment and sustaining measures on which actions are built and maintained.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: Data will be collected using an Excel spreadsheet, with accompanying short narratives (paragraphs) on the details of the benefits of each policy, law, regulation, resolution or agreement related to NRM and biodiversity conservation.

Disaggregated by: Municipality

Data source: Designated national line agencies, LGUs (municipal and *barangay* or village) and local government offices with authority over the municipal waters within Romblon Passage and marine area networks in coordination with the Program management staff and pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Copies of policies, laws, regulations, resolutions, and agreements or other indicator accomplishments will be available for verification.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 6. Number of sectoral groups involved in natural resource management as a result of USG assistance.	Year	Target	Actual
	1	36	36
	2	36	36

Unit of measure: Number of groups

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Target	Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	18	6	12	18	18
San Agustin	6	6	8	6	6
Sta. Maria	5	5	8	5	5
Calatrava	7	5	8	7	7
TOTAL	36	22	36	36	36

Definition: The number of groups involved in natural resources management refers but is not limited to non-government, civil society, people's organizations, youth organizations, schools and learning institutions, and/or private sector stakeholders regularly participating in NRM and biodiversity conservation activities. These activities may include stakeholders' meetings, participatory resource assessment and monitoring, coastal clean-ups, mangrove planting, marine mammal rescue, trainings, and awareness campaign.

Rationale: Coordinated citizen participation and appropriate partner building at the municipal level support sustainable management of natural resources along and across Romblon Passage. The indicator tracks the approximate potential number of individuals engaged in supporting policies, agreements, and regulations that provide the enabling environment on which management actions are built as well as in promoting and sustaining the natural resources and environmental management, and biodiversity conservation awareness campaign of the Program.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: Data will be collected using an Excel spreadsheet, with accompanying short narratives (paragraphs) on the details of the groups and organizations involved in natural resource management to the extent that the involvement supports NRM and biodiversity conservation objectives.

Disaggregated by: Municipality

Data source: Program management staff in coordination with pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to the LGUs and/or appropriate local government agencies/offices whose jurisdiction encompass the municipal waters within Romblon Passage, and community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Lists of groups/organizations by sector verifiable through credible data sources. Information on follow-up contact with sectoral groups will be made available.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 7. Number of information, education and communication (IEC) materials produced as a result of USG assistance.

Year	Target	Actual
1	930	379
2	0	1,650

Unit of measure: Number of pieces of IEC materials developed and distributed

	Year 1			Year 2	
	Target	Actual (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	469	119	119	0	650
San Agustin	153	86	86	0	400
Sta. Maria	153	85	85	0	300
Calatrava	155	89	89	0	300
TOTAL	930	379	379	0	1,650

Definition: IEC materials include posters, billboard signage, primers, and children’s workbooks developed and distributed to raise awareness and general public support for the rehabilitation and management of Romblon Passage, the maintenance of MPAs, mangrove forests and sea turtle nesting areas as well as the protection and conservation of marine mammals. The project will produce 300 posters, 30 billboard signage, 300 primers, and 300 children’s workbooks. These IEC materials will focus on the promotion of mangrove, sea turtle, and marine mammal protection and conservation as well as on the identification and management of giant clams.

Rationale: Constituency building and public awareness raising are essential aspects of many USAID programs because they enable support for natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation actions as well as highlight resources, initiatives, and results of the Program.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: Data will be collected using an Excel spreadsheet, with accompanying short narratives (paragraphs) on the details of the IEC materials developed and distributed.

Disaggregated by: Municipality

Data source: Program management staff in coordination with pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to the LGUs and/or appropriate local government agencies/offices whose jurisdiction encompass the municipal waters within Romblon Passage, and community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Distribution Lists as well as copies of IEC materials or other indicator accomplishments will be available for verification.

Baseline Information: Assumed to be zero. The baseline is February 2011.

Indicator 8. Percent increase in local investments for coastal resource management.	After Year	Target	Actual
	1	7.39%	10.29%
	2	7.39%	68.77%

Unit of measure: Percentage

	After Year 1			After Year 2	
	Target	Projected (Jan.-Sept. 2011)	Actual (Jan.-Dec. 2011)	Target	Actual
Romblon	5%	41.3%	41.3%	5%	95.65%
San Agustin	10%	0%	-40%	10%	158.1%
Sta. Maria	5%	0%	-40%	5%	-20%
Calatrava	10%	37.5%	37.5%	10%	37.5%
TOTAL	7.39%	25%	10.29%	7.39%	68.77%

Definition: "Local Investments" for coastal resource management refer to any cash or in-kind contribution by both public and private sectors to activities intended to strengthen sustainable natural resource management and/or biodiversity conservation.

Rationale: An increase in local investments for CRM is a direct measure of support for natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation. This indicator measures leveraging of public and private resources to improved and sustained resource management efforts.

Data Collection and Analysis Methodology: Data will be collected using an Excel spreadsheet, with accompanying short narratives (paragraphs) on the details of the local investments related to NRM and biodiversity conservation.

Disaggregated by: Municipality

Data source: Designated national line agencies, LGUs and local government offices with authority over the municipal waters within Romblon Passage and marine area networks in coordination with the Program management staff and pertinent stakeholders including but not limited to community-based organizations based in aforementioned LGUs.

Data Verification: Lists of LGU investments verifiable through credible data sources (e.g., LGU CRM Annual Budget Appropriation, LGU Certification, etc.). Copies of pertinent documents such as Deed of Donations or other indicator accomplishments will be available for verification.

Baseline Information:

	FY 11	After Year 1	After Year 2
	LGU allotment for CRM (in PhP)	LGU allotment for CRM (in PhP)	LGU allotment for CRM (in PhP)
Romblon	460,000	650,000	900,000
San Agustin	250,000	150,000	645,248
Sta. Maria	250,000	150,000	200,000
Calatrava	400,000	550,000	550,000
TOTAL	1,360,000	1,500,000	2,295,248

