

**Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
PROTECTED AREAS AND WILDLIFE BUREAU (PAWB)**

**Accomplishment Report  
June 2011 – June 2012**

**A. INTRODUCTION**

The Philippines is rich in biological and genetic resources or biodiversity. It is one of the 18 megadiverse countries in the world. Majority of the plant and animal species in the country are unique and cannot be found anywhere else. These are sources of food, medicines, industrial raw materials, fishery and ecotourism. They also represent the natural heritage of the country and a rich source of customs, traditions and cultural identity. However, Philippine biodiversity is also one of the most threatened in the world.

The Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), being one of the staff bureaus of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) was created by virtue of Executive Order No. 192 dated 10 June 1987 to ensure that the country's biodiversity are protected from various threats. DENR-PAWB, as the lead agency tasked to conserve these resources, envisions a perpetual existence of biological diversity (biodiversity) in a system of protected areas and other management areas with the participation of a well- informed and empowered citizenry. With this vision, the Bureau is mandated to formulate and recommend policies and programs for the establishment and management of an integrated protected areas system and conservation of biological diversity; monitor and assess the establishment and management of the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) and biodiversity-related activities; and provide technical assistance to regional Offices and other clientele. Specifically, its primary tasks are the following:

- a. Establishing and Managing Protected Areas;
- b. Conserving Wildlife;
- c. Promoting and Institutionalizing Ecotourism;
- d. Managing Coastal Biodiversity and Wetlands Ecosystems;
- e. Conserving Caves and Cave Resources;
- f. Information and Education on Biodiversity and Nature Conservation;
- g. Managing Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center and the HinuluganTaktak Protected Landscape; and
- h. Negotiating Biodiversity-Related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and Monitoring National Implementation.

## **B. HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **1. Establishing and Managing Protected Areas**

The main concerns of this Program are the identification, delineation and management of areas that would fall under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS). This involves activities related to the protection of resources within national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and other areas considered to become part of NIPAS.

The establishment and management of protected areas are guided by the National Integrated Protected Area System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 and its implementing rules and regulations under DENR Administrative Order No. 25, Series of 1992 which was eventually amended in 2008 under DAO 2008-26 dated 24 December 2008. This Administrative Order sets the procedures for the establishment, administration, management and development of the System.

To date, there are two hundred forty (240) identified protected areas in the Philippines. Of the 240, one hundred thirteen (113) protected areas were formally proclaimed by the President under the System covering a total of 3.57 million hectares. Of the 113 proclaimed protected areas, 29 are marine protected areas with an area of 1.37 million hectares while 84 are terrestrial protected areas covering an area of 2.20 million hectares covering 0.68% and 7.33% of the total land and marine areas of the country, respectively.

One of the major milestones in the protection and management of protected areas is the implementation of the National Greening Program (NGP) in these areas. NGP seeks the attainment of sustainable human development, and economic and ecological security, improve water quality in rivers and irrigation for farm lands, reduce the potential for flooding, soak up carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere, and lay the foundation for an expanded wood-products economy.

As a strategy, it aims to plant indigenous and endemic tree species including fruit trees in identified denuded/degraded protected areas in partnership with concerned stakeholders especially those identified peoples organizations in protected areas. To date, a total of 8,421.18 hectares were planted with 3,161,430 seedlings in 64 PAs, and 319.5 hectares of mangroves were planted with 549,730 seedlings.

The Bureau and the Protected Areas, Wildlife and Coastal Zone Management Sector is continuously implementing other programs and activities related to protected area management such as demarcation/delineation of PA boundaries, management effectiveness tracking, management planning and zoning, law enforcement and monitoring of protected areas to effectively manage these protected areas.

## 2. Conserving Wildlife

The Bureau and the Sector have been continuously implementing various programs and projects in line with the implementation of the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act (RA 9147). In terms of policy development, we have facilitated the approval by the DENR Secretary of the following Administrative Orders for the establishment and management of critical habitats:

- DAO 2011-02 “Declaring a certain parcel of land located at Sitio Kalanganan, San Vicente, Baungon, Bukidnon as Critical Habitat for *Rafflesia schadenbergiana*” (approved by DENR Secretary Paje on 23 February 2011)
- DAO 2011-10 “Declaring Cabusao Wetland Area situated in Brgys. Pandan and Biong in the Municipality of Cabusao, Camarines Sur as Critical Habitat for Philippine duck” (approved by DENR Secretary Paje on 23 August 2011)
- DAO 2012-01 “Declaring Malasi Tree Park and Wildlife Sanctuary situated in Brgy. San Antonio in the Mun. of Cabagan, Isabela as Critical Habitat for Waterbird species” (approved by DENR Secretary Paje on 7 February 2012)

Critical habitats are established to protect and conserve the threatened species in the area in partnership with LGUs or private sectors. To date, there are four (4) critical habitats established with a total area of 382.237 hectares.

As part of our efforts to curtail illegal wildlife trade, we have established linkages with our law-enforcement partners and collaborated for the apprehension of twelve (12) Vietnamese nationals on board a Malaysian fishing vessel by DA-BFAR MCS 3009, headed by Lt. Ludovico D. Librilla, Jr. of the Philippine Coast Guard on April 22, 2012 and confiscated frozen marine specimens of a) five bundles of black coral; (b) 87 pieces of hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*); and (c) around six hundred kilograms (600 kgs) of assorted hammerhead fish, grouper, and squid.

PAWB worked with the Hongkong CITES Management Authority and effected on 27 April 2012 the repatriation of 13 heads of Asian Box Turtles (*Coura amboinensis*) and 18 heads of Philippine Pond Turtles (*Siebenrockiella leytenensis*) confiscated in Hongkong in February 2012. The pond turtles were immediately turned over to the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) while the box turtles were placed under the custody of PAWB-WRC.

The species conservation programs/projects on Tamaraw, Philippine Eagle and raptors, Pawikan and crocodiles were also implemented and monitored:

## **2.1 Philippine Raptors Conservation Project (PRCP)**

The Project is designed to prevent the extinction of the highly endangered and unique Philippine Eagle, and other equally important birds of prey such as hawks, brahminy kites, and sea eagles. It complements and supplements the researches being conducted in Davao with an off-site focus of operation in Luzon and the Visayas regions. The Project operates through captive breeding, field researches, which include the assessment of the remaining eagle habitats and inventory of current wild population, and information dissemination program.

As part of the Project's habitat assessment and eagle survey, there were several incidents of eagle sightings in the Cordillera Mountain Ranges: (a) breeding pair and a juvenile eagle were sighted by a team from the DENR-Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau, DENR-Cordillera Administrative Region and the Philippine Eagle Foundation during their joint field expedition from November 3-11, 2011. The confirmation of the presence of wild population of the Philippine eagle in Calanasan, Apayao is a welcome development in our efforts to determine and map the remaining population distribution of the Philippine eagle in the country for priority conservation and protection; and (b) on February 2012, a new eagle territory was discovered in Pudtol, Apayao.

To date, the population of Philippine Eagle in the wild is estimated at 340 pairs (Ibanez, et al 2003). However, based on monitoring conducted in confirmed Philippine Eagle sightings, there are around 29 individuals sighted.

PAWB and Haribon also launched a project entitled: "Survey and Conservation of Philippine Eagle in Central and Southern Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges" in Baler, Aurora on 22-24 May 2012, which is being funded under the Preventing Extinction Program of Birdlife International.

The Bureau has also initiated for the drafting of a MOA between DENR and the University of the Philippines – Diliman for the implementation of the project entitled: "Reintroducing the Philippine Eagle in Southern Leyte Ensuring the Survival of the King of the Birds". One of the Objectives of the Project is to implement a Philippine eagle reintroduction program in the Island of Leyte where the probability of extirpation of the species is high.

To further increase the level of awareness of the public, the Project collaborated with ABS-CBN in developing an infomercial to be aired at least once every quarter over national television and broadcasted over local radio stations once a month to generate support and continued awareness for the conservation of the Philippine Eagle that has been continuously persecuted over the past several years. The infomercial was aired starting June 8, 2012 at ABS-CBN, local radio stations 101.9 FM and DZMM.

On 04 June 2012, PAWB launched the Philippine Eagle Week celebration with the theme “Lipad Agila, Sulong Pinoy”. Part of the launching event was the story telling entitled “Fly Malay Fly” with representative from Haribon, PAWB officials and personnel as audience.

## **2.2 Pawikan Conservation Project (PCP)**

The PCP is a response to conserve the dwindling marine turtle population in the country. It is responsible for the formulation and implementation of conservation and protection policies, management and propagation schemes and massive information and education program to ensure the survival and growth of the country’s marine turtle resources.

The Project continuously maintained the hatcheries in Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary (TIWS) in Tawi-Tawi, and in Nagbalayong, Morong, Bataan.

Several linkages have been established with concerned partners for the conservation and protection of marine turtles. The Project prepared and facilitated the signing of the following Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs):

- Establishing partnerships on marine turtle protection and conservation between and among the DENR through PAWB and DENR 4A, LGU-Naic, Cavite State University-Naic, Shoreline Kabalikat sa Kaunlaran Inc., Far East Maritime Foundation Inc., International Maritime and Offshore Safety Training Institute, Tropical Garden Resort, and Sabrina Fair Philippines, Inc.

The MOA was signed by the partners on 31 January 2012 at Brgy. Labac, Naic, Cavite which was the highlight of the launching of the Naic-Pawikan Conservation and Protection Projects. Part of the launching was the release of 202 olive ridley hatchlings.

- MOA between Calamai Tropica & the municipal government of Hinoba-an entitled “Joint Marine Turtle Conservation at Hinoba-an, Negros Oriental” (Public-Private-Partnership Program for the conservation of marine turtles)

- Collaborative Project on Marine Turtle and Dugong Conservation and Protection entered into by DENR-PAWB and Marine Wildlife Fauna Watch of the Philippines which was signed on 23 February 2012 at NAPWC Compound, Quezon City.

### **2.3 Tamaraw Conservation Project (TCP)**

The Project is designed to prevent the extinction of the Tamaraw, which is endemic to Mindoro, and to protect and conserve its habitats. It carries out captive breeding experiments, habitat characterization, maintenance of the Tamaraw Gene Pool in San Jose, Mindoro and public awareness campaign program. The Project also provides livelihood opportunities to local communities within the province of Mindoro.

The TCP has regularly monitored and protected important Tamaraw habitats within Mts. Iglit-Baco National Park and in Aruyan-Malato-Tamaraw Reservation. The annual Tamaraw count held on 16-23 April 2012 sighted around 327 individuals within the Mts. Iglit-Baco National Park.

### **2.4 Palawan Wildlife Rescue and Conservation Center (PWRCC)**

The PWRCC has continued its maintenance and protection of the two (2) species of crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus* and *Crocodylus mindorensis*) and their habitats. To date, the Project maintained 312 heads of *Crocodylus Porosus* and 444 heads of *Crocodylus mindorensis* at the Center. There are also 351 other wildlife species maintained composed 22 heads of mammals, 111 heads of birds, and 217 heads of reptiles.

The Office of the Secretary released an amount of Two Million Pesos (Php2,000,000.00) for the renovation and improvement of the PWRCC and as of this date, the following had been accomplished to wit: (i) Construction of three (3) public comfort rooms outside the building; (ii) Cleaning and repainting of various facilities of the building including existing comfort rooms; (iii) Improvement of crocodile deck walk including construction of roof; (iv) Construction of walk way roof from the main building to the hatchling; and (v) Construction of walk way roof from hatchling house to crocodile deck walk.

One of the major highlights during the period is the capture of the largest crocodile on record in the marshlands of Bunawan, Agusan del Sur last 03 September 2011. Weighing 1,075 kilos and measuring 20.1 feet in length and 3.3 ft in width, the reptile in the wild was the object of a hunt in the Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary in the past two years. On November 09, 2011 marks another history in wildlife conservation as representative from the National Geographic Channel declared "Lolong" as the largest crocodile caught alive in the wild and maintained in captivity.

On March 22, 2012 conducted a workshop was conducted to develop the Crocodile Capture Protocol which aims to develop a protocol that will serve as a measure to address human crocodile conflict.

### **3. Promoting and Institutionalizing Ecotourism**

The ecotourism development in protected areas was crafted to make it a viable tool for sustainable development within the recreation zones specified in the protected area management plan. As a form of sustainable tourism within a natural and cultural heritage area, multi-stakeholder participation is ensured. In addition, protection and management of natural resources; culture and indigenous knowledge and practices; environmental education and ethics; and economic benefits are fostered and pursued for the enrichment of host communities and satisfaction of visitors.

This year, PAWB conducted site assessment for ecotourism development at Butuan City, Caimpugan, San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, and Leyte Sab-a. A database was also prepared for ecotourism sites with assessment reports for areas with Full Site Diagnostic, Business Planning, LGU partnership and ecotourism development plan.

With the recent pronouncement of *His Excellency*, President Benigno Aquino III, PAWB closely coordinated with the Department of Tourism (DOT) to pursue convergence efforts on the development and management of the 83 priority ecotourism sites in line with the Philippine Tourism Development Plan. To date, identification of specific priority areas for development under the tourism portfolio of the said plan is underway.

### **4. Managing Coastal Biodiversity and Wetlands Ecosystems**

There are several efforts on marine biodiversity which were extended to concerned stakeholders particularly to local communities:

- (i) Developed the National ICM Program and conducted the regional and national stakeholder consultations;
- (ii) Provided technical assistance to LGUs in the development of 80 ICM Plans;
- (iii) Co-organized and facilitated the orientation workshops for LGUS on MPA establishment, management and networking including the staging of the MPA awards for outstanding marine protected areas throughout the country;
- (iv) Developed guidelines on mangrove rehabilitation and reversion of abandoned, unproductive and unutilized Fishpond Lease Agreements into mangrove forests through a convergence initiative of DENR , DA-BFAR and DILG, and Coastal Law Enforcement Manual;
- (v) Implemented initial activities of the Sustainable Coral Reef Management Program such as the development of the coral

- rehabilitation guidelines, social mobilization activities, habitat and vulnerability assessment, among others; and
- (vi) Coordinated the collaborative efforts of Batangas-Oriental Mindoro MPAs and Bantay Dagat Networks for the management of Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor.

#### **4.1 Establishment of the DENR National Coastal and Marine Center for Research**

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 192 and consistent with the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Strategy provided under Executive Order 533, DENR Secretary Ramon Paje issued on 03 November 2011, DAO 2011-12 entitled “Establishing Snake Island as the DENR National Coastal and Marine Center for Research”.

DENR Secretary Paje immediately authorized the release of Three Million Pesos (Php3,000,000.00) for the renovation and enhancement of the DENR facility in Snake Island and another Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php500,000.00) to defray the salaries and wages of six (6) hired laborers to guard the island and sustain the cleanliness of the surrounding, and to effectively implement the closure order of the Secretary to any tourism activity in the island.

As of 21 May 2012, the following had been accomplished: (i) Renovation of the building including painting and improvement of the two (2) units comfort rooms inside the building; (ii) Construction of two (2) public comfort rooms outside the DENR building; (iii) Provision of terrace and a veranda around the facility; (iv) Provision of one (1) sala set and one (1) office table; and (v) a temporary helipad.

#### **4.2 Coral Triangle Initiatives**

The Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) is dedicated to promoting healthy oceans by helping people manage their marine resources through creating and strengthening Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), promoting seascape management at a large scale, improving fisheries, adapting to climate change and recovering threatened species.

The CTI National Plan of Action (CTI-NPOA) is the fulfilment of the country’s commitment to the conservation and protection of the Coral Triangle Region which is strategically implemented in sites selected by the national CTI coordination committee, the field implementers, our development partners and academic and research institutions.

In relation to the implementation of the CTI-National Plan of Action (NPOA) the Philippine through PAWB coordinated for the development the following: (i) State of the Coral Triangle Report; (ii) Management Effectiveness Assessment Tool (MEAT) for monitoring of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs),

MPA Financing Studies; (iii) Action Plan on Climate Change Adaptation for Coastal Communities; and University Mentoring Program.

## 5. Information and Education on Biodiversity and Nature Conservation

To further our efforts in raising awareness and disseminate information for the conservation of flora and fauna of the country, PAWB has facilitated and set-up exhibits, video and powerpoint presentations for special events such as the following:

- The Philippine Eagle Week being celebrated nationwide every June 4-10 of each calendar year. This year's theme, "**LIPAD AGILA...SULONG PINOY**" symbolizes the Filipinos' tenacity and resilience in overcoming the odds to achieve its goals soaring high amidst all adversaries. Various forms of information and education campaigns have been lined up for the 2012 PEW's festivities to create awareness about the importance of conserving the iconic Philippine eagle and the environment at large. A mobile infovan, "Harivan" will showcase various informative materials such as videos, brochures, and CDs on the ecology and biology of this magnificent bird of prey. A wide assortment of tarpaulins and posters will be hung in strategic areas of the metropolis and major thoroughfares nationwide, academic institutions as well as the "*Pahayagang Bayan*" along the EDSA MRT stations, including conservation education campaigns in selected schools upon the resumption of classes.
- Celebration of the Month of the Ocean 2012 DENR has been annually celebrating annually the MOO through various activities that campaign for the continuous protection and conservation of our coastal and marine resources. This year, array of activities were observed, with the theme: "**Buhay Dagat, Buhay Natin!**" in conjunction with the observance of the International Day of Biological Diversity (IDBD) on May 22 and its theme of **Marine Biodiversity**. Highlights of the event was the mural painting - Marine Biodiversity painting of the 1,075 meter-fence of the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center involving about 700 volunteers from different sectors. This was followed by the Ocean jam which showcased different performances in advocating conservation and protection of the Philippine Coastal and Marine environment.
- The PAWB Gender and Development (GAD) Focal Point System conducted the fun walk/run on March 9, 2012 at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center (NAPWC) compound. This activity is in line with the celebration of the Women's Month.

Information, Education and Information campaign was conducted with the production and dissemination of information materials (e.g. streamers, tarpaulin signages, printed t-shirts and information kits) during the celebration of environmental events. Biodiversity-related facts and figures were likewise

uploaded to the PAWB website to increase the level of awareness among the general public.

## **6. Managing Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center (NAPWC) and the HinuluganTaktak Protected Landscape**

The Project aims to develop and maintain the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center (NAPWC) as the link between urban ecosystem and natural forest ecosystem in order to promote consciousness on the value and importance of natural heritage. Likewise, it aims to develop the park into a premier ecological destination and people's center in Metro Manila. NAPWC maintained the different facilities and amenities which catered to the needs of the public. Among which are: (1) Bulwagan Ninoy, where public and official functions are held; (2) Gazebo, which is found in the heart of the lagoon used for official and social functions; (3) amphitheater; and (4) Fishing Village, used for various public activities.

NAPWC also maintains the Wildlife Rescue Center (WRC) where confiscated and donated wildlife are temporarily kept for custody, medical treatment and/or later released. The Center recorded successful breeding of the following species which were confiscated from illegal trade: Green imperial pigeon, (*Ducula aenea*), a Nicobar pigeon, (*Caloenas nicobarica*) and two (2) pairs of Island-collared dove, (*Streptopelia bitorquata*) started building their respective nests in recycled *kaings*. One of the nests of the island-collared doves had two (2) squabs that hatched on May 16, 2012.

As of June 2012, WRC houses a total of 1,015 different animals (20 arthropods, 126 mammals, 323 birds and 546 reptiles).

## **7. Negotiating Biodiversity-Related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and Monitoring National Implementation.**

The Philippines, through the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau is a signatory to International Conventions for the conservation and protection of biodiversity. These conventions are: (1) Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); (2) Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS); (3) Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES); and (4) Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl habitats (Ramsar Convention).

The Bureau continues to establish links and cooperation with various local and international institutions that paved the way for technical cooperation and financial assistance for the conservation of biodiversity nationwide such as the following:

**a. National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in the Philippines**

In line with the decision made during the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD-COP) in 2010, the Philippines, thru PAWB is in the process of updating the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) based on Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and Aichi Targets 2011-2020 which was adopted during the 10th COP-CBD. PAWB, in partnership with the UNDP, was able to facilitate the approval of a grant from the Global Environment a Facility (GEF) to facilitate this process. The Project Document required for the release of the grant is being finalized for submission to GEF this July 2012.

Initially, the Project has organized a Technical Working Group composed of biodiversity experts from NGAs, academe, private institutions and CSOs who will provide scientific and practical guidance for the updating of the NBSAP .

**b. Expanding and Diversifying the National System of Terrestrial Protected Areas in the Philippines (NewCAPP)**

The development objective of the Project is to expand and strengthen the terrestrial PA system in the Philippines by developing new PA models and building capacity for effective management of the system.

The notable accomplishments of the Project are as follows:

**Outcome 1 – Expansion of the Terrestrial PA System**

- (i) Recognition/establishment of 15,036 has. as conservation areas (ICCA and LCA) and development of Community Conservation Plan
- (ii) Identification of elements of the National ICCA Framework as defined in the Manila Conference on ICCA

**Outcome 2 – Capacity Building to Manage Existing PA System and New Conservation Areas**

The Project was able to: (i) implement priority capacity development activities which resulted, among others increased appreciation of IPs and other stakeholders at the national and local levels in ICCA; (ii) integrate biodiversity concerns in LGU Plans and adopt conservation plans by relevant stakeholders; and (iii) completed capacity

assessment of PAW Sector which resulted in the development of the Proposed Capacity Building Program for the PA Sector and validation of the baseline capacity development scorecard for PAWB and PAW Sector.

### Outcome 3 – Sustainable PA Financing

The NewCAPP has accomplished the following: (i) establish linkages with other institutions for the economic valuation studies in project sites (Mt. Nacolod, Polillo, Tawi-Tawi and Zambales Mountain Ranges); (ii) submitted a draft policy for increasing development fee for the utilization of PA resources; and (iii) provision of support in the procurement of Consultants for NPS-ENRMP, which intends to support 18 PAs in the formulation of Business Plans including identification of viable PA revenue-generating activities.

#### **c. Partnerships for Biodiversity Conservation: Mainstreaming in Local Agricultural Landscapes Project (Biodiversity Partnership Programme)**

The Biodiversity Partnership Program (BPP) is in recognition of the need to address habitat fragmentation brought about by inadequate policies, tools and capacities, to encourage the participation of local government units in mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in local agricultural landscapes. The key intention of this project, therefore, is to increase the capacity of the LGUs to mainstream biodiversity conservation in agricultural production landscapes/seascapes geared towards the protection and enhancement of the quality of the environment and the sustainable management of the natural resources.

In this early stage of implementation, the Project has accomplished the following:

- (i) Conducted capacity assessment for BPP Responsible Partners, to determine and validate their technical and financial capacities to implement the project
- (ii) Facilitated the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement between partners (Haribon, PEF, FFI, PBCFI, CI Philippines and HLURB)
- (iii) Facilitated the inclusion of biodiversity conservation in the green business terminologies under the DILG's Local Investment and Incentive Code
- (iv) Created the Project Board chaired by Undersecretary Manuel Gerochi, with members from partner agencies and CSOs, and the Inter-Agency Technical Working Group which is composed of partner organizations, i.e., DA, DTI, DENR Bureaus, DOT, HLURB, NEDA, UNDP, NCIP, PCW, League of Provinces and Municipalities, and CSOs. The TWF will serve as a sounding board of their respective offices to facilitate the information dissemination and feedback,

**d. Rehabilitation and Sustainable Use of Peatland Forest in Southeast Asia (ASEAN Peatlands Forest Project or APFP)**

The APFP's objective is to promote the sustainable management and rehabilitation of peatlands through awareness raising, capability building and enhanced inter-agency cooperation for the benefit of the local community and the conservation of biodiversity.

A key strategy is to develop sustainable uses of peatlands by local communities and conservation measures for areas of high biodiversity through the implementation of small community-led projects at Caimpugan peat dome in Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary in Mindanao and Sab-a Basin peatland in Leyte Island, in the Visayas. Among the important activities undertaken were the following:

- Attendance to relevant international workshop and meetings relevant to peatland management;
- Operationalization of the national and local working groups on peatlands
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, including preparation of publishable materials for policy makers and general public;
- Identifying donor agencies for sustainable financial mechanism for peatland management;
- Land use planning activities including consultations;
- Site assessment for rehabilitation and guided demo farm; and
- Ecotourism site assessment and stakeholders' consultation.

**e. Manila Bay Environmental Management Project (MBEMP)**

The project is a local component of the Regional Programme on Building partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia. It aims to develop and implement a **Operational Plan for Manila Bay Coastal Strategy (OPMBCS)** in partnership with national government agencies and stakeholders both from public and private sectors. Hereunder are the notable achievements:

- PAWB Manila Bay Technical Working Group was created on 02 September 2011 for the implementation of the Operational Plan for the Manila Bay Coastal Strategy;
- Conduct of the Training Workshop on Macrobenthic Assessment at the Manila Ocean Park-Manila on 14-17 December 2012 to capacitate selected DENR personnel in assessing and monitoring benthic system with important mudflats of Manila Bay;

- Conduct of initial reconnaissance survey and initial assessment of coastal habitats and other inland bodies of water in Manila Bay together with the representatives from Region 3, 4A and NCR (LPPCHEA); Sasmuan-Macabebe, Pampanga; Tortugas and Puerto Rivas in Bataan;
- Actual conduct of Macrobenthic Assessment in the monitoring sites (Sasmuan in Pampanga; Tortugas in Bataan; LPPCHEA and Navotas in NCR and Naic, Ternate and Noveleta in Cavite) from January to March together with the representatives from NCR, Region 3 and Region 4A.
- Identified wetlands for possible designation as wetlands of international importance are: (i) Las Piñas-Paranaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area; (ii) Sasmuan, Pampanga; (iii) Tortugas, Bataan; and Candaba Swamp, Pampanga.
- Establishment of marine turtle sanctuary in Naic, Cavite in collaboration with Pawikan Conservation Project
- Conduct of Mangrove validation within Manila Bay Region (NCR, Region 3 and 4A)