



# SULU FUND FOR MARINE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION, Inc.

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## The *Sulu Fund* is starting a new Marine Protected Area Project on Improving Coral Reef Marine Protected Area Management in the Philippines

Since 1980, over 400 marine protected areas (MPAs) have been legalized, yet only about 10% are actually achieving the objectives of habitat protection. Due to poverty of coastal communities and general lack of concern and awareness for coastal habitats, coral degradation is rampant. Exploitation and destruction of coral reefs through extraction, illegal and destructive fishing, pollution and other forms of mismanagement have threatened these habitats as well as food security they offer communities.

In response to the deterioration of the coastal resources in the Philippines, the *Sulu Fund for Marine Conservation Foundation, Inc.* created the Marine Protected Area Project with the overall goal to improve the management and conservation of coral reef ecosystems through marine protected areas with application for the Asia Pacific region. This project is supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Pew Fellows Program in Marine Conservation.

Among its key objectives are (1) to quantify coral reef resource uses, values and benefits in monetary terms in the context of MPA implementation for use in education and improved human value formation, and to encourage government and donor investment in coral reef conservation; (2) to develop a functional certification and rating system, linked with the valuation framework, for existing MPAs in the Philippines to be implemented through local and national government agencies with support from NGOs that builds on existing and tested management guidelines; (3) to test and modify the certification and rating system on upto 100 MPAs through strategic field monitoring that considers governance, functional age and size gradients of the existing MPAs; (4) to monitor and assist with the implementation of up to 10 MPAs to obtain



*A healthy coral reef area provides shelter and food for fish.*

information and feedback and; (5) to produce publications that summarizes the results and disseminate lessons through brochures, video, websites, posters, and national seminars.

The research will include:

- Ø Analysis of existing data on selected 10 MPAs
- Ø Fill gaps in data sets from 10 MPAs
- Ø Collate data from other MPA research projects
- Ø Design and test database for storing all MPA relevant information
- Ø Perform data analysis on all datasets
- Ø Determine criteria for ranking quality of MPAs
- Ø Design and conduct resource valuation study

Other activities include field interventions to develop model MPAs, The *Sulu Fund* is maintaining a library database of MPA materials. We welcome contributions of information to include and any suggestions.



# Editorial

## Why the need for Marine Protected Areas?

by *Dr. Alan T. White*

MPAs are catching on in the Philippines, but why? What are the benefits to be derived from a well-managed MPA? MPAs can enhance food security by stabilizing and increasing fish catch from coral reefs. MPAs can maintain the integrity of a coral reef so that it can export larvae, juvenile and adult fish to other adjacent areas that enhance fish yields, reproduction and overall quality of the reef environment.

MPAs are also increasingly attracting tourists because of the corals and fish protected. Tourists can bring cash income to coastal communities if a MPA is managed to maximize potential revenues. The Gilutongan Marine Sanctuary near Cebu City is now collecting 50 pesos for every diver that visits the sanctuary. The diver buys a ticket for entry. Each boat that enters the sanctuary must have a yearly pass purchased from the municipality. Revenue to the Gilutongan Island Community for the year 2000 was over 100,000 pesos. This amount does not include the portion of revenue accruing directly to the municipality of Cordova. This model may not work everywhere but it is worth considering given the need for alternative income among coastal residents. We should remember that resources such as coral reefs have many inherent values depending at least partially in human perception ranging from food sources to the wonder of biodiversity which attracts thousands of SCUBA divers every year to the Philippines. We can benefit from the values people place on coral reefs and learn how to tap them for the benefit of coastal communities, local government and conservation!



*Top to bottom: A healthy coral reef; a diver enjoying the reef; and encouraging community participation in conservation efforts*

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## The Sulu Fund is selecting 10 priority sites for its MPA Project

by *Marchita Dolino*

Sulu Fund is busy carrying out the first phase of its new MPA project. Field work in the Visayas area has been conducted since June to facilitate the selection of the ten priority sites where the project will concentrate its intervention for the certification system. In collaboration with the Coastal Resource Management Project, the Sulu Fund is assisting with Participatory Coastal Resource Assessment (PCRA) and Coastal Resource Management (CRM) activities in various municipalities of Cebu Province.

Marine sanctuary management planning workshops are being conducted in the municipalities of southwest Cebu province. These workshops are participatory involving all the stakeholders in the coastal communities. The workshops cover field

sources within their proposed/existing marine sanctuaries. Likewise, interviews are conducted to gather land-based information of various human activities, which may have impacts in the marine sanctuaries. By joining in these activities, Sulu Fund is able to develop necessary experience around Cebu.

A major MPA Management Planning workshop was conducted on 25-27 of July 2001, in Dumaguete, Negros. Representatives of 13 sanctuaries from Negros attended. This activity focused on how to strengthen fishermen's organizations for managing their marine sanctuaries employing participatory approaches.



# Saving Philippine Reefs: Earthwatch Expedition 2001 in Batangas

by Sheryll Tesch



*The wacky group of Team 1 flashing their best smile.*

It is an ultimate diver's dream to participate in a three-week dive expedition involving two dives a day and one snorkel. This is exactly what 18 volunteers, from the Philippines, U.S., England, and Indonesia; and 8 Philippine staff members, from the Sulu Fund and the Coastal Resource Management Project, did under the support of the Earthwatch Institute from April 6 to 25, 2001. The experienced divers and snorkelers prodded themselves on from seven in the morning, until six in the evening to collect and organize much needed data for important ongoing conservation projects in the area.

The information about coral reef quality, due to management efforts, human impacts and environmental factors; was collected and collated and analyzed for the benefit of various organizations. A comprehensive report was completed and is available from the Sulu Fund.

The Sulu Fund has a reef conservation project in Batangas along with several other organizations. The *Kabang Kalikasan ng Pilipinas* (KKP-WWF), whose staff benefited from the training in reef assessment methodologies for application in their ongoing field projects in the Batangas area, can also use the data to validate the results of their ongoing conservation project. Similarly, resort owners and the two municipal governments who are all exerting efforts in participatory reef conservation through the establishment of marine protected areas can use the data to see progress and gaps in their work.

Among the ten sites assessed, four of them are marine protected areas (Twin Rocks, Arthur's Rock, Dive and Trek, and Cathedral Reef) declared by municipal ordinances. The other sites (Sepoc Point, Layag-layag, White Sand, and White House), two of which are close to becoming marine protected areas (Sombrero Island and Pulang Buli) are all frequented by both local and international tourists.



*Team 2 showing off the new sanctuary sign.*

As a result of efforts toward conservation and effective reef management, Twin Rocks, Dive and Trek and Arthur's Rock maintain a stable living coral substrate as well as a high fish species diversity and abundance. However, despite these efforts, persisting problems include the absence of anchor buoys, no prominent signs with sanctuary maps and rules, and the relatively low level of awareness of tourist and local community about reef conservation. Fortunately, destructive and illegal fishing practices are mostly eliminated from the area while over-fishing, increasing shoreline development, absence of anchor buoys, and pollution of solid wastes, still need to be addressed.

Aside from some discouraging findings, Team One (six volunteers) and Team Two (eleven volunteers), remained the ever efficient and enthusiastic group of characters during the data collection period. Because of the simultaneous activities during the research period such as Holy Week and Earth Day, the trip was made more interesting with various visitors and events. The barangay of Sto. Tomas held an art contest participated by most of their community members, and Team One acted as judges for each art category. Team Two, in turn, presented the trophies and prizes to the winners of each category a week after the contest, and danced during the barangay's Earth Day celebrations. Finally, participants cannot forget the late nights of UNO games, after dinner laughs and underwater footage by Mark Copley, and the constant taunting of Indonesia volunteer, Enny, of staff member Brian Giles. The hospitality of Arthur Abrigonda's family and staff at Arthur's Resort, the mothering of Vangie White, and the much needed and consistent encouragement of Alan and Patrick, all made this Earthwatch trip more than just a research expedition, but a memory that each member will be able to recall, time and again, with fondness and smiles.



## **Earth Day 2001 Celebration in Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tingloy, Batangas**

by *Danny Ocampo*

As part of effort to raise the awareness of the community on environmental issues, a month-long campaign for the environment was initiated by Sulu Fund in the community of Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tingloy, Batangas. The Earth day celebration in April 2001 was centered on the theme: LET'S BRING BACK THE BOUNTY OF OUR SEA. This theme came up during an evaluation and planning meeting of representatives from Sto. Tomas in February. The group of fishers in the meeting adopted this theme as their overall objective in recognition of the continuing decrease in fish catch and the need to address it immediately. As a community dependent on fishing and fishery resources, they agreed that their goal will be to restore the bounty of the sea such that fishing can support their basic needs again.

Looking back at a year-and-a-half of organising work in the barangay with limited resources and manpower, Sto. Tomas was a community that did not have any long-term plan for managing its coastal resources. In 1999, Sulu Fund helped organise a local community organisation called *Samahan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Sto. Tomas* (STKST or Organisation for the Development of Sto. Tomas). To assess progress and evolving issues, an evaluation and planning meeting was conducted last February 17-18, 2001 at Villa Luz Resort, Silang, Cavite. STKST's objectives include the establishment of a fish sanctuary, unity among community members and exploring supplementary livelihood sources.

Today, community members are able to explain the principles behind a fish sanctuary and its importance in ensuring a sustainable fish catch in the future. However, the situation in Sto. Tomas is not perfect. Fisherfolks fear that Sto. Tomas could loose control of their area and its benefits if they are not proactive. On the whole, the Earth Day celebration was a synergy for different sectors and different interest groups and stakeholders. The local community had a chance to convey their concerns to a few representatives from the tourism sector and the interaction led to a better understanding of the other stakeholders' concerns when it comes to the use of the sea. The community is now on the verge of completing a coastal resource management plan for their barangay for the establishment of a fish sanctuary and a community-based enterprise to provide supplementary livelihood sources.



## **NEWS TIDBITS**

by *Anna Meneses*

### ***Philippine Coral Reefs, Successfully launched in Manila and Cebu***

The long wait for Dr. Alan White's latest book, *Philippine Coral Reefs, A Natural History Guide* published by Bookmark, Inc. was recently launched in Metro Manila (Feb. 28, 2001) and Cebu City (March 17, 2001). The occasion was a huge success. The author was delighted with the warm response shown by researchers, students, divers and underwater enthusiasts for the book.

*Philippine Coral Reefs* is a compilation of observations of the obvious life forms found on coral reefs around the Philippines. Over 600 underwater photographs from 13 expert photographers are shown. It documents the animals and plants that make up the coral reef ecosystem and highlights the interrelationships among the various organisms of each living community. For those interested to obtain a copy, the book is available in all Bookmark outlets and the Sulu Fund office in Cebu.

### **Sulu Fund congratulates Mr. Lory Tan and Ms. Angelique Songco!**

Two of Sulu Fund's board members are now working with *Kabang-Kalikasan ng Pilipinas - WWF, Philippines*. Mr. Lory Tan was recently appointed as the new President of *KKP-WWF Philippines* and Ms. Angelique Songco was assigned as the new Tubataha Park Manager. Good luck and congratulations to you both!

### **Welcome to new Sulu Fund staff!**

We welcome Anna Meneses, Marchita Polino, William Villaver and Rafael Lopez.

*Anna Meneses* is an MS student at the University of the Philippines Los Baños taking up Environmental Science. She worked as an RA for the ReefBase Project of ICLARM previously. She will work on the MPA database and assist to implement the MPA project.

*Marchita Polino* finished BS Social Work at the Silliman University, Dumaguete. An experienced community organizer, she worked with CRMP of Negros through the RTN 'Ting' Matiao Foundation, Inc. before joining the Sulu Fund. She will coordinate and assist to implement field interventions in selected MPAs.



William Villaver is currently working on his MS at the University of the Philippines in Cebu taking up Environmental Studies. An experienced researcher, he used to work at the CRM section of Provincial Planning and Development Office, Cebu province. He will help test the certification/rating system and obtain information and feedback.

Rafael Lopez graduated with a degree in AB Philosophy from the University of Sto. Thomas. He previously worked for the Public Information Office of Valenzuela as writer/layout artist. He will be based in Batangas and assist in an effort to organize the community for CRM and the implementation of a marine sanctuary in the area.

## We encourage coral reef-friendly diving practices!

The Philippines is known for its highly diverse marine ecosystem. There are about 500 species of hard corals and approximately 2,000 species of coral reef associated fish species. The beauty of our coral reefs attract both local and international divers/tourists.

It is fun to dive. But sometimes we forget our responsibility to the environment. So here are some coral reef-friendly reminders:

- ☺ Check the condition of your gear. Practice caution every time you dive.
- ☺ Use just the right amount of weight for easier buoyancy control.
- ☺ Secure all equipment so it won't drag on the corals.
- ☺ Do not wear gloves or kneepads. This will keep you from touching the corals.
- ☺ Avoid contact with corals and never chase or provoke marine animals.
- ☺ Only handle and feed marine life under expert guidance.
- ☺ Collect floating plastics and garbage.

When out of the water, practice coral reef-friendly habits:

- ☺ Encourage and support the use of dive moorings.
- ☺ Don't buy souvenirs made of corals, turtle shells or other marine life.
- ☺ Always pay protected area fees.
- ☺ Strictly obey all local dive rules, regulations and customs.

*"Let us not be the cause of coral reef degradation, instead let's all be agents for environment conservation!"*

## Sulu Fund for Marine Conservation Foundation, Inc.

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*"Promoting leadership for improved coastal resource management"*

*We're on the web!*  
<http://www.sulufund.org>

The **Sulu Fund for Marine Conservation Foundation, Inc.** (or **Sulu Fund**) was founded in 1998 to support marine conservation in the Philippines. The name was taken from the Philippines' southern Sulu Sea known for its extremely high marine biodiversity unequalled in the world. The name thus symbolizes a benchmark of marine biodiversity sought in other parts of the Philippines and globally. The **Sulu Fund** is focused on protecting the marine environment. It tries to help conserve and manage coral reef ecosystems and other coastal resources while promoting sustainable uses for the benefit of people throughout time.

## Board Members for year 2001

President	Dr. Alan White
Vice President	Mr. Lory Tan
Treasurer/Secretary	Mrs. Evangeline White
Batangas Coordinator	Mr. Albert Salamanca
Palawan Coordinator	Mrs. Angelique Songco
Journalism/Writer	Ms. Yasmin Arquiza
Research Support	Mrs. Maria Carmel Meyer

## Sulu Fund's wish list!

Contribute something to our wish list....

- ♦Scanner
- ♦Fax machine
- ♦Over-head projector
- ♦Camera
- ♦Megaphone
- ♦Electric typewriter
- ♦Dive gear (BCD, regulator, wet suit, etc)
- ♦Hand-held radio (2-way)



# Sulu Fund for Marine Conservation Foundation Books and Products

**BOOKS**

1. **Philippine Coral Reefs, A Natural History Guide** (2001). Alan White, 276 pages, soft-cover: Pesos 1,950 / \$US 39. A natural history guide directed at the general public. Acquaints readers with new organisms and presents a glimpse of a fascinating underwater world. Contains 623 colored photos.
2. **Beneath Philippine Seas** (1997). Robert Yin, 135 pages, hardbound: Pesos 1800 / \$US 36; soft cover: 1300 pesos/ \$US 26. A wonderful assortment of large underwater photos on each page by one of the most dedicated Filipino photographers residing in San Diego, CA.
3. **Philippines Coral Reefs in Watercolor** (1997). Rafael Cusi (artist), Bortles, L., White, A.T., and Cassey, C. (text), 128 pages, hardbound: Pesos 1,800 / \$US 36. A stunning collection of watercolor paintings depicting Philippine coral reefs at their best in an extremely pleasing style. This unique book is enhanced by text which describes both the plight of coral reefs and the activities underway in the Philippines to conserve and manage this valuable resource.
4. **Field Guide to the Common Mangroves, Seagrasses and Algae of the Philippines** (1997). Hilconida Calumpang and Ernani Menez, 197 pages, soft-cover: Pesos 500 / \$US 10. This is the first comprehensive and authoritative book on the common marine plants of Philippine shores and reefs. It facilitates identification to the species level with good, clear photographs.
5. **A Field Guide to Whales and Dolphins in the Philippines** (1997). Jose Ma. Lorenzo P. Tan, 50 pages, soft-cover: Pesos 395 / \$US 8. The first guide book on whale watching in the Philippines. It reveals the diversity of cetaceans in the Philippines and has many good photos with an attractive layout.
6. **Tales from Tubbataha: Natural History, Resource Use, and Conservation of the Tubbataha Reefs Palawan, Philippines** (2000). Yasmin Arquiza and Alan White, 136 pages, soft-cover: Pesos 595 / \$US 12. This is the only book which summarizes the status of Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park in a comprehensive and readable manner. It tracks the changes in the coral reef environment from impacts of people and in relation to political forces.
7. **Philippine Red Data Book** (1997). Wildlife Conservation Soc. of the Phil., soft-cover: Pesos 410 / \$US 8. Endangered and threatened species of the Philippines.
8. **Philippine Biodiversity** An assessment and action plan (1997). Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), Pesos 1,500 / \$US 30.
9. **Atlas of the Seaweed** (1997). Gavino Trono, Jr., Pesos 885 / \$US 18.
10. **Anilao 2000** by Eduardo CuUnjieng, hardbound Pesos 3,700 / \$US 74.

**OTHER PRODUCTS:**

15. **Save Philippine Reefs T-Shirt**. Design with reef fish on front, Small, Medium or Large, Pesos 300 / \$US 6.
16. VHS Tape of **"Philippine Coral Reefs-Resource at Risk"** .Pesos 500 / \$US 10.
17. VHS Tape of **"Quiet Places"**. Pesos 500 / \$US 15 goes with "Ecotourism in the Philippines" Book. Pesos 140 / \$US 3.
18. **Post cards** (various underwater designs) photo by R. Yin 12 pcs per pack for Pesos 100 / \$US 2.
19. Map of Philippine Culture and Ecosystems. Pesos 150 / \$US 3.
20. Map, Decline of the Philippine Forest. Pesos 125 / \$US 3.

**ORDERING AND PAYMENT:**

Please send orders to Sulu Fund in Cebu and enclose payment by **check** payable to Sulu Fund in Pesos or \$US. For mailing within the Philippines, please add Pesos 100 / \$US 3. For airmail outside of the Philippines please add Pesos 600 or \$US 12 to your order. Via Federal Express or DHL, please add \$US 42.

*Note: Prices in US \$ are subject to change without prior notice.*

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