

### Sharing Learnings & Insights from 2 International Conferences

Community-based coastal resources management is an expanding field. Its acceptability as an approach towards sustainable development has rapidly gained support as more and more practitioners worldwide acknowledge its potentials and adaptability. And after years of doing CBCRM, the knowledge base has swelled from the collective experiences of communities around the globe. Two recent international conferences became an opportunity for CBCRM practitioners to compare experiences, take stock, and look forward to more work for the sustainable development of coastal communities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Last October, five delegates to the China Conference of CBNRM Program Implementers in Asia (held in Oct. 2000) and the Coastal Zone Canada Conference (held in September 2000) shared their lessons and insights from these conferences to a mixed audience of 28 representatives from the Resource Pool, CRMNet, and the general public at the University of the Philippines-Diliman CSWCD conference room. Resource Pool Fellows Elmer Ferrer, Orlando Arciaga, Rebecca Rivera Guieb, Rodolfo Quicho, and Jenny Graham of IDRC described how their knowledge on the issues of gender mainstreaming, network building, and sustainable livelihoods were enriched by listening to the perspectives and experiences of other CBCRM practitioners worldwide. They also expressed appreciation for issues that have not been normally tackled by local groups at an extensive scale such as water management, resource use conflict, and community based tourism v.s. development aggression. They reported that for many CBCRM practitioners in poor countries, there still remains the bigger challenge of relating conservation work to social justice, and harnessing community organizing to effect good governance.

The speakers noted a deepening understanding of the value of CBCRM work among the Asian delegates and posed a challenge to their fellow Filipino CBCRM advocates to maintain their interest and level of creativity as pioneers of CBCRM work in the region. One area discussed with great enthusiasm was the increasing use of modern technology in communications and information management. The speakers showed samples of IEC materials that also came in CD format (multi-media packaging), and mentioned how development organizations abroad are becoming more and more reliant on the internet for communications, data collection and even fund raising/marketing (e-commerce.)

Among those operating in third world nations, the nagging question on how much CBCRM has contributed to the alleviation of poverty at the macro and micro scale remains. The development of more appropriate monitoring and evaluation tools for finding out whether intervention strategies really work was brought up, alongside the need for CBCRM practitioners to consciously document and publish their lessons and experiences. Concurrent with advocacy and networking efforts, the speakers of this sharing brought to fore the importance of writing down (and publishing) program and organizational experiences as way of establishing legitimacy as stakeholders, and in staking a claim to the right to be consulted and heard in the policy formulation process.

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**Acquisitions (1997 editions)**

Anemone Fishes and Their Host Anemones  
*By Daphne G. Fautin & Gerald R. Allen*

Beneath the Philippine Seas  
*By Robert Yin*

Ecologica Filipina  
*By the Environmental Center for Philippine Environment*

Field Guide to Atlas Seaweeds  
*By Gavino C. Trono*

Philippine Biodiversity  
*By the DENR – UNEP*

Philippine Coastal Marine Habitats at Risk: A Case Study of Guimaras Island  
*By Ricardo P. Babaran, Jose A. Ingles (eds.)*

Philippine Red Data  
*By the Wildlife Conservation Society of the Philippines*

The Philippine Fisheries  
*By the Ibon Databank and Research Center*

Southeast Asia Tropical Fish  
*By Rudie H. Kuiter/ Helmut Debelius*

### Photo File



Orly Arciaga of Haribon shares his insights on the conferences held in China and Canada while other speakers (from right:) Atty. Jun Quicho (Tanggol-Kalikasan), Jenny Graham (CoRR) and Becky Rivera-Guieb (Tambuyog) listen.



Audience power! (front row, from left:) Dr. Angelito Manalili & Mayen Villanueva (CSWCD), Dick Balderama & Allan Vera (SIKAT), Murin Velasco(Tambuyog); back row: Prof. Thelma Magcuro (UP-CSWCD) and Jun Manalo (OTRADEV)

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Subject: Next steps for the CEFM group

By: Arjan Heinen

#### WHY focus on fisheries management?

From our experience in Danao Bay we learned that even with extensive rehabilitation of the mangroves (from 20 ha in the 1960s to 400 hectares, again in 1996), with the presence of a very functional sanctuary, with a reduction in dynamite fishing from 5 blasts a day (up to 1990) to 1 a month (2000), **the catches of the fishers** (which include shell gleaners) **keep on declining** (that is true for all gears).

Surprisingly, fishers are still very supportive of the program. One reason is that they feel that the situation would have been worse if the sanctuary would not have been there, and the mangrove areas would still be mud-flats. However this is a feeling hard to support with evidence. I think that if they would not have had the sanctuary and not have rehabilitated the mangroves, but had developed a fisheries management regime that would have increased fish biomass in the area, the catches would have been bigger.

It is not too late and the learning process is functional for any area but the step towards fisheries management has to be taken one time.

*(This article is an excerpt from an ongoing electronic (email) discussion among the fellows of the Fisheries Management Cluster of the CBCRM Resource Pool.)*

#### WHAT CAN BE DONE ?

The insight that low fish densities are the cause for the low production is breaking through worldwide. (SAMUDRA reports a fisher leader in Spain saying: We do not believe that it is the fishermen who are the producers, it is not like that at all, it is the fishes themselves. We may or may not have a future, depending on how we harvest this production.) Now fisheries economics with its focus on resource rent has never thought in this direction.

The goal of fisheries management in the coastal fringe in the coming 10 years will be to increase fish and invertebrate biomass in the area in order to increase production. Maybe in 2010 we can start talking again about resource rent. Until that time we are talking about food security and survival of the fisheries.

This requires a major structural change in fisheries management. From management by economists/ development thinkers to management by fishers/ecosystem thinkers. And from open access to limited access starting with the registration of all fishers and shell gleaners. In the long run even part time shell gleaning will only be allowed if certain requirements are met.

These are rather revolutionary changes requiring people's understanding and participation. The present overexploitation offers one advantage. It requires a temporary restrain in catches to restore the stocks. This requires sacrifices from the people involved. It is these sacrifices that justify the transfer from open to limited access. You cannot expect from people to make these sacrifices if they are not the ones who profit from them in the long run. And promising limited access can be the reward needed to make the sacrifices.

## What is CBCRM?

COMMUNITY-BASED COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT is...

- a people-centered, participatory, and resource-based approach that uses participatory, integrated and multi-sectoral processes
- its key concepts are:
  - community organizing and leadership formation
  - participatory research
  - education and training
  - resource management
  - livelihood development
  - enhancement of cultural integrity and diversity
  - networking & advocacy

*(Elmer Ferrer & Cristi Nozawa, "CBCRM:Key Concepts, Methods, and Lessons Learned". A Paper presented at the IDRC Workshop on CBNRM in Asia, University of Agriculture & Fisheries, Vietnam, 1997.)*