

**FORMATION OF CRM COUNCIL  
FOR THE CBCRM OF PAGAPAS BAY  
Western Batangas**

*by  
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*This paper focuses on the formation of Coastal Resource Management Council, a key player in the implementation of Community-based Coastal Resource Management on Pagapas Bay, Calatagan, Batangas.*

*Site Profile*

Pagapas Bay has an area of 2,930 ha. The shore has an almost continuous fringing reef surrounding the bay to the North and to the West. In some parts, the bay reaches over 200 m in depth. Approximately 365 ha of the bay is 0-10 m in depth, 817 ha 10-15 m, leaving 1770 ha over 50 + m in depth.

The whole area is enclosed within 7 km of the coast and therefore, banned to commercial fishing vessels.

Barangay surrounding the bay are Bagong Silang, Tanagan, Sta. Ana, Sambungan, Bucal, Encarnacion and Hukay. The program is operating in all the barangay except for Bucal and Sambungan.

The area of mangroves in Pagapas Bay is 26.3 ha. In the 1950s, there were 132.8 ha but resource degradation has reduced the area to the remaining 19.8%. All remaining areas of mangrove appear dominated by Kalapinay/Api-api (*Avicelruia rpp.*), Pagatpat (*Soneratia caseolaris*) and Bakawanan (*Rhisosphere rpp.*).

A fringing reef occurs along the inshore area of Pagapas Bay with breaks at Tanagan and Pt. Baluarte. The reef descends to below 10 m, in places, to a sandy substrate. The coral cover can be generally classified as degraded with an average of 1-10% live cover.

The Pagapas Bay watershed is dominated by the Santiago River in the north. Despite its relatively smaller size, it feeds the rice fields of barangay Lucsuhin while other seasonal rivers of the bay are not as reliable.

In coastal areas surrounding Pagapas Bay, 35.5% of the total land area is planted to sugar while riceland comprises only 3.1%. Degraded forest (scrub) constitutes 26.6% and the remaining forest area accounts for 5.7%.

The whole of Calatagan (the municipality covering Pagapas Bay) has a population of 35,543 (1992 NCSO). Of this figure, 58% or 20,639 can be found in coastal communities. The number of fishers is 1,937 which accounts for 22% of the coastal labor force.

Most of the people are engaged in fishing and/or farming. Some are also engaged in livestock raising.

The fishers are generally engaged in the traditional method of catching fish using hooks and lines, drift and bottom set nets. Artisanal fishermen using non-motorized bancas venture only up to 5 km from the shore, while those on motorized bancas go farther than 7 km, sometimes even reaching Mindoro. Based on the Fish Stock Assessment conducted by CERD, a fisher's average catch per day is 2.5 kgs. Hence, estimated monthly income of fishers along the bay ranges from P 500 - P 2,000.00.

Social services available to coastal communities include education and health. Schools are usually located along the highway, causing problems for coastline residents who have to use rough roads to reach the highways. Coastline residents usually have very low educational attainment, finishing elementary level, but seldom going beyond secondary.

Most of the areas have health centers but are also often located along the highway and therefore, relatively inaccessible. The government and some private institutions conduct occasional medical missions.

### *Community Problems and Issues*

CERD's partnership with the fishers in Pagapas Bay revealed the following problems and issues regarding resource use:

#### a. Foreshore Land/Demolition of Coastal Communities

Majority of the foreshore lands where the fishers reside are being claimed by private individuals as titled, despite the government law that it is a public domain. Particularly in Bagong Silang and Hukay, cases of eviction and demolition are apparent. This can be traced to the still unresolved issue of the Ayala-Zobel land case.

#### b. Quarrying of Corals and Sand, Illegal Cutting of Mangroves

Despite the ban issued by the government, wanton destruction of corals, quarrying and illegal cutting of mangroves continue to prevail. This is being done to give way for construction of resorts and fishponds.

c. Unfair Competition Coming From Big Capitalists' Vessels/Ventures Encroaching On The Traditional Fishing Ground

Trawlers, pursue seines, fishponds and prawn farms have encroached into what was before the domain of subsistence fishers. These methods practically leave the fishing grounds empty for the small fishers to fish.

d. Non-ownership of the Means of Production

A large number of the fishers do not own the banca or the gears needed in the pursuit of their livelihood. Hence, they become workers of those who own the means of production and receive only a fraction of the produce.

e. Most Fishers Are Highly Dependent On The Middlemen To Market Their Catch

The fluctuating daily catch and the perishability of the produce makes them dependent on the middlemen. This system binds the fishers to the whims of the middlemen. The absence of control of the marketing system and lack of access to credit facilities aggravate their economic status.

f. Industrialization

The CALABARZON project of the government poses as a strategic threat to the conservation, rehabilitation and maintenance of the marine environment and its optimum utilization. Blueprint of the project shows that the bay would be transformed to tourism/recreational area while the adjacent Balayan Bay would be converted into an industrial zone thereby producing tailings and pollution which will affect the productivity of the bay.

*The Community Extension and Research for Development, Inc.*

*History*

In 1978, an informal group of professionals embarked on a community-based program in a farming community in Pangasinan, using it as an entry point into organizing the people towards solving their various problems, maintaining links and sharing experiences with other organizations helped the group to focus its effort in fishing communities where only but a few development agencies had been involved.

In 1983, the group concentrated on conducting researches on the fisherman's problems, holding consciousness raising activities and providing training for the fishers. The shift in thrust led to the

formation of the *Community Extension and Research for Development, Inc. (CERD)* and registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission in September, 1983.

CERD's sponsorship of a National Consultation of Small Fishers in 1986 significantly led to the identification of key issues affecting the sector in various parts of the country. The consultation eventually paved the way for the formation of a national fishers, the *Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA-Pilipinas)*.

### *CERD's Vision*

CERD envisions coastal communities where there is sustained economic development and equity; where the people, particularly the fishers, are entrusted with the control, use and management of the seas and its resources. To be able to contribute towards the building of a Philippine Society that is free, democratic, just, humane, and gender fair, CERD shall engage in sustainable development programs, particularly organizing, education, capability building, research, coastal resource management, socio-economic and cooperatives development, as well as cooperation with other NGOs, POs, GOs, and other entities for the promotion and implementation of the programs. This has been the guiding principle of the institution in its CBCRM program implementation.

### *Project Objectives and Components*

Pagapas Bay was selected as CBCRM area for the following reasons:

- a. Presence of fishers' organizations who already experienced collective undertakings or if there is no fishers organization yet, the willingness of the community to be organized and to collectively work towards the resolution of community issues;
- b. The communities have a relative concentration of fishers that the program will address;
- c. There a few development or no programs present; and
- d. The communities are strategically seated in terms of influencing adjacent fishing communities.

CERD's core program, the *Fishery Integrated Resource Management for Economic Development (FIRMED)* is an operationalization of Community-Based Coastal Resource Management (CBCRM). FIRMED approach to development recognizes that problems of the fishers can only be

addressed through an integrated approach, which does not only undertake traditional and alternative livelihood projects but also take steps to protect and rehabilitate productive land and marine/aquatic resources and utilize them up to optimum levels.

Its core strategy is community organizing which focuses on the fisher sector in the coastal communities of a given/selected bay area and inter-related resource units; that is, contiguous barangays in a specified fishing ground.

In pursuing development work in coastal community, FIRMED seeks to tap the organized strength of the fishers and other sectors through their local people's organizations and the cooperation of Local Government units, Government Agencies, and other Non-Government Organizations. Linkage with these sectors is envisioned to promote a multi-disciplinary approach to solving the fisher's problems.

The Fishery Integrated Resource Management for Economic Development Program (FIRMED) aims at sustainable resource management of the coastal resources at the bay level through fisher community organizing, participatory research and resource monitoring, resource rehabilitation, setting-up of socio-economic projects and support infrastructures, and the establishment of linkages and working relationships with both government and private institutions for technical support and advocacy for CBCRM.

To effectively implement CBCRM, FIRMED employs the following strategies:

1. Determining alternative livelihood sources that are appropriate, viable, sustainable, replicable and gender-sensitive.
2. Awareness campaigns and efforts to push for stricter enforcement of fishery and environmental laws;
3. Enhancement of organizing and capability-building skills of people's organizations, leaders and development workers;
4. Strengthening the network between other NGOs and local government units; and
5. Developing and refining CBCRM practice and methodologies, e.g., monitoring of rehabilitation efforts and promulgating appropriate ordinances.

The FIRMED program has five basic components. The core component is the *Coastal Community Organizing* which aims to build viable and functional organizations. It ensures the participation of the community in the planning and implementation of the programs/projects. The

*Human Resource Development* component aims to develop and train key leaders and members of People's Organizations at the sitio, barangay, municipal, and at the provincial level. Along with this effort is the development of its own program staff and other NGOs in order to meet the required needs of the programs/projects. The *Socio-Economic Program Development* aims to establish cooperatives, savings and credit facilities to attain economic and political empowerment for the marginalized sectors. The *Sustainable Fisheries Development* is geared towards the protection, conservation, and rehabilitation of the resources in order to achieve productivity and sustainability at the optimum level. Through *Advocacy and Networking* development efforts are to be coordinated and integrated into complementary and parallel efforts to achieve effectivity and efficiency.

#### *The Formation of Coastal Resource Management Council*

CERD-Batangas started implementing the FIRMED program. Research as conducted through *Rapid Rural Systems Appraisal*. The results were validated in the presence of the fishers and local officials. Common problems raised during the research and validation were decreasing income due to the deterioration of the marine resources brought about by the illegal fishing activities. Seeing the need to address the problems, the fishers formed their organizations. The municipal organization formed in Calatagan was named *Samahan ng Maliliit na Mangingsda sa Calatagan (SAMMACA)*.

Hand in hand with the partner POs and united in the principle of organizing the coastal communities and to make them implementer-advocators of a community-based resource management through an integrated approach, CERD-Batangas and the people's organizations launched the FIRMED program. The issues identified and being lobbied was substantiated by the result of the research conducted by CERD. The demands as presented to the different coastal municipalities were supported by sufficient data. This would have reverted to attempts by the municipal officials to derail or intimidate a certain negotiation. Furthermore, the parallelism of efforts was complementary, resulting in better bargaining. Particularly in Calatagan, the call for the passing of a resolution declaring Pagapas Bay a Marine Reserve was approved, even extending the scope to the whole municipal waters of Calatagan.

In January of 1993, the government offered the Bantay-Dagat Program through the Office of the Congressman of the First District and the Philippine Maritime Command. The fishers organized and did not readily agree to the offer. Instead they consulted their own ranks and CERD as well.

CERD facilitated a formal study group (composed of leaders and CERD staff) to review the Bantay-Dagat proposal. This was the time when the concept of a *tri-sectoral approach* was reached. The concept was presented to the leading agencies as an alternative. Here, unlike the proposal, the POs and NGOs are part of a formal structure on equal footing with the LGUs. Moreover, the concept has somehow been broadened from anti-illegal and commercial fishing to a coastal protection and rehabilitation objective.

From February to May, a series of dialogues and workshops were held to discuss the proposed Tri-Sectoral Consultative Body (TSCB). The first three (3) months were considered the crucial stage of the negotiation. The LGUs for example, were quite ambivalent to the concept of TSCB. But May 9, they agreed to set up the body and together they have agreed to name it the *Nasugbu, Lian, and Calatagan (NALICA) Coastal Resource Management Council (CRMC)*. This was followed by a commitment from Congressman Eduardo Ermita to put an initial fund of P 300,000.00 from his Countryside Development Fund (CDF). Each municipality shall have an allocation of P 100,000.00.

The council is composed of the mayors of the 3 municipalities, the PNP Maritime Command, Philippine Coast Guard, BFAR, Sanggunian/HABAGAT, CERD, and Congressman Eduardo Ermita as adviser. The CRMC will be presided by the municipal mayors every 4 months. In addition, a Secretariat was formed to ensure the effective coordination with every municipality in the CRMC. The Secretariat is composed of the Information Officers of the 3 municipalities, the Secretary General of the PO, and the Advocacy Officer/CO Supervisor of CERD.

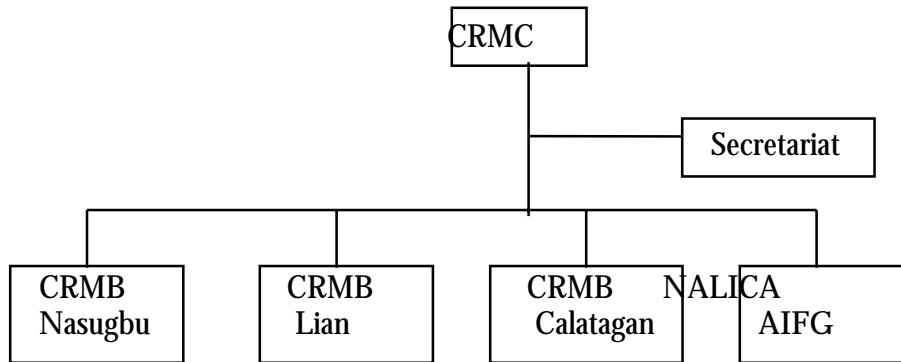
### *Significant Developments*

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was ceremoniously signed on May 28, 1993 in Lian, Batangas. It was entered into by the municipalities of Nasugbu, Lian, and Calatagan, by the PNP Maricom, Coast Guard, BFAR, Sanggunian/HABAGAT, and CERD. The MOA states that the objectives of CRMC are to rehabilitate the municipal waters of NALICA, address the illegal fishing activity, and poverty situation of all sectors in the coastal communities, strengthen the partnership among GOs, POs and to promote the protection and sustainability of the municipal water of NALICA. The factions of the different committees are also stipulated in the MOA.

The first two CRMC months were focused mainly on the organizational/ institutional concerns. It was also in this stage that there is a conscious effort coming from the PO and NGO to

level off with all the members, especially those coming from the LGUs. This was done through the reiteration of the concepts contained in the MOA. Also noteworthy is the ground working factors.

*CRMB Formation*



Structurally, CRMBs are the municipal counterparts of CRMC. This is where the specificity of the municipal coastal issues are being discussed and resolved. That is why, after the CRMC Executive Committee formalized its composition and initially set its target for the succeeding months, it called for simultaneous meetings which paved the way for submission to the *Sangguniang Bayan* the proposed 15 km. municipal water ordinance, allocation of P 100,000 funds, and request for fish warden’s training.

During the October 5, 1993 meeting of the ExeCom the emerging consensus was to pass a uniform ordinance on the 15 kilometers municipal waters. Also in this venue, they decide to include CRMB as an item in their respective municipal budget for 1994. According to them, this is to augment the continuity of CRMB program and plans for the coming year.

*NALICA-Wide Operationalization*

On November 9, 1993, the Chairperson (Mayor Dominador Bonuan of Lian) called for a joint Sanggunian Bayan Session (Nasugbu, Lian, and Calatagan Sbs) to legislate the uniformity of the 15-kilometer Municipal Waters Ordinance. As a result, a technical committee was formed consisting of 3 representatives from each Sanggunian Bayan. The technical committee scheduled meetings and public hearing with the fisher organizations and CRMC members regarding the unified ordinance.

The debate was focused on two important items; (1) the draft penalty (which is P 5,000.00) exceeds the limit stipulated in the Local Government Code for each Sanggunian Bayan which is P 2,500.00 only; (2) amendments made by one Sanggunian Bayan to exclude in its coverage



the titled lands (privately-owned) in its 20 meters “salvage zone areas” or public property declaration. It is in this area that the CERD and Sanggunian/HABAGAT unitedly pushed for the “No Exemption/Amendment Policy”.

This was also the month of checking what was accomplished and what have to be done for the next months. Some of the expected activities were the following:

1. Dialogue/meeting with the Congressman of the First District, DENR, and the Bureau of Lands on the continued fencing and privatization of foreshore lands;
2. Continuous monitoring for the enactment of the 15 Kilometer ordinances;
3. Follow through of all the unities/resolutions already made; and
4. Continuous documentation and research.

*1994*

CRMC was not able to hold a meeting on the first month of the New Year. The municipalities had been very busy with report on revenues as well as preparation of plans for the new fiscal year. First meeting was held in February. In this meeting actions for the demand of the PO were discussed, among them the Ordinance on 15 km. municipal waters limit, wherein the Joint Technical Committee reported that said ordinance is not needed because illegal/commercial fishing within the 7 km. municipal water limit is already in PD 704, and the expansion from 7 km. to 15 km. municipal water is already in the Local Government Code. Further study, however, revealed that since technically, PD 704 covers only 7 km, an Ordinance was indeed needed. The ExeCom also approved the request for insurance. It will be a P 10,000.00 premium with an initial payment of P 200.00 per individual at the Manila Bankers Life Insurance. To be covered by the Insurance are the fish warden, ExeCom and Secretariat members.

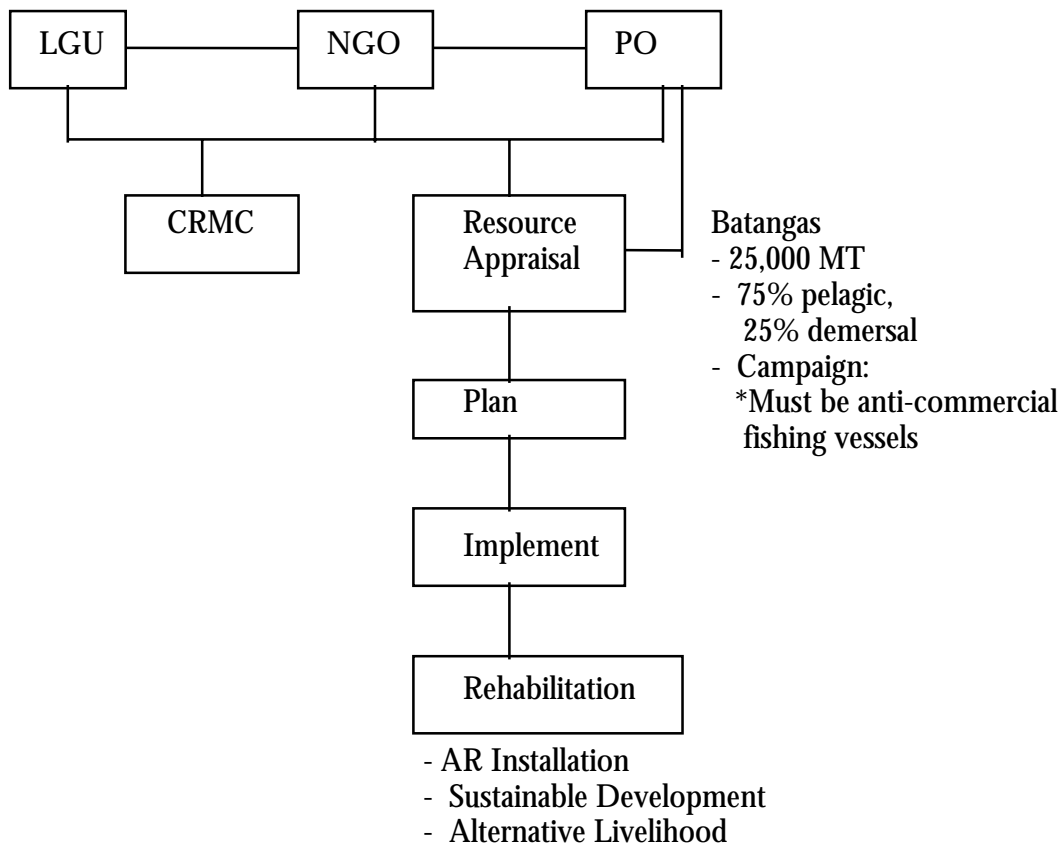
*CRMC is One Year Old*

The CRMC celebrated its first year anniversary on June 17, 1994 with a daylong meeting/summing up of the experiences during its first year of implementation. Activities included were the overview of CB-CRM Models, presentation of the NALICA-CRM experience, reaction/presentation of fishers perspective of CRMC, as well as inspirational messages from the mayors of the three municipalities and other guests.

DA and BFAR discussed that CRMC is not part of FSP. On its first year of operation CRMC has given trainings on how to implement fishery laws, as well as SOPs on apprehending violators. Research has also been conducted on alternative livelihood related to fishing and rehabilitation projects like AR installation.

CERD on the other hand discussed that the people’s organizations in Batangas had already launched mass actions even before the formation of CRMC. However, this council was formed because it is believed that the fishery problems in Batangas cannot be acted upon by only few barangays. The government is supposed to be the protector of our resources but it has limitations.

The matrix showing CERD’s CB-CRM Model was also presented:



The NALICA experience was presented by the incumbent chairperson, the mayor of Calatagan. He said that before the formation of CRMC, the PO’s appealed to the municipal office but usually, their requests were not acted upon. After the MOA signing, CRMBs were formed in each member municipality where the POs are represented. Chairmanship of CRMC was on a rotation basis.

The CRMC under the chairmanship of:

- a) Nasugbu: monthly meetings were conducted during this period. Through the validation of RRSA District I, CRMC was able to take off.
- b) Lian: training on fish warden was conducted with the help of BFAR. The AIFG was formed and helped in the implementation of fishery laws.
- c) Calatagan: evaluation/analysis of the achievements of CRMC and its vision for the next year was done. Problems were encountered when Calatagan became the venue for meetings. Conflict between law enforcers and fishers were also encountered. Municipal mayors were very busy during this period. But reports indicated that there is a decrease in dynamite fishing and catches are increasing. However, coral collection still exists and is not yet fully controlled. It has also been observed that during the months of May and June, CRMC operation slowed down.

After the presentation was the Open Forum. Representatives from the POs in Lian and Nasugbu read statements that said CRMC still has no program, collaboration between Coast Guard and Commercial Fishing Vessels still exist, and the fishers themselves are the only ones serious in apprehending the commercial fishing vessels. They consider CRMC a failure.

The mayors reacted by saying that CRMC has a program; it has implemented PD 704, the 15 km. Municipal Limit is in effect, the ordinances being acted upon by the provincial council. Also, CRMC has done apprehensions, supports CRMBs, and aside from the P 100,000.00 given by Cong. Ermita, the municipal offices also shared. They reiterated that CRMC is only a year old and for it to be effective, problems encountered by members should be discussed during the meetings.

For the resolution of problems especially between fish warden and Coast Guard the mayor of Lian suggested a dialogue between agencies involved.

### *CRMC on its Second Year*

On the second year of CRMC two incidences happened to CERD which affected its participation to the council. The FIRMED program in Lian ended, and the Advocacy Officer, who primarily represents CERD to the CRMC, had resigned and a replacement was not immediately hired. Meanwhile, the Program Coordinator took over, but contact to the POs in Lian and Nasugbu was cut. CRMB Calatagan however, continued with its operation, appointing the PO Chair as Liaison Officer. Discussions on the Marine Reserve Implementing Guidelines was pushed through

the Sangguniang Bayan and problems encountered with the apprehensions of illegal fishers were acted upon.

By the year 1995 CRMB Calatagan had been affected by the activities involved with the May 8 National/Municipal Elections. Government officials, especially those running for reelection like the mayor himself, had been very busy with the campaign that CRMB was not able to convene. Meanwhile, resurgence of illegal fishing activities occurred in Pagapas Bay, and the Marine Reserve Implementing Guidelines was not yet approved.

Mayor Jose Coz, Jr. was not reelected as municipal mayor of Calatagan. The fish wardens, seeing the need to address the growing problems in Pagapas Bay, called for a dialogue with the different government agencies headed by the new Municipal Mayor, Pedro Palacio. Among those requested in the dialogue were the continuity of the CRMC; the approval of the Marine Reserve Implementing Guidelines; logistics problem of the AIFG like communication facilities; as well as actions on continuing illegal activities like mangrove conversion, quarrying, and dynamite fishing. Mayor Palacio expressed his willingness to help in whatever way, but expressed his problem of being new in the office, having been sworn to only a week. He, however, committed himself to studying the proposals, particularly the CRMC. He also called on the PO to be accredited and be a possible sectoral representative in the Municipal Council.

### *Findings*

1. The Need for Implementing Guidelines:

This was manifested during the first three months of CRMC. Since the MOA did not touch the matter, the initial phase was devoted to ground working, regularization of meetings and formalization of the Secretariat.

2. Majority of the CRMB and Secretariat members were not included/participants to the previous negotiations/dialogues (January-May 1993) for the CRMC conceptualization stage. A lot of leveling-off and even basic orientation was given during the ground working and during the start of the meeting.

3. Almost all Secretariat members are key persons in their municipalities especially in the absence of the mayor. They have difficulty attending to their responsibilities as Secretariat especially at the start and end of the year when the municipal office prepares year-end report.

4. The MOA did not cover the institutionalization of CRMC in the member municipalities. Although the municipal mayors signed the MOA as representatives of their offices, procedure to the turn-over of the council to their possible successors was not discussed in

the MOA. This resulted in the reorientation of the new municipal mayor in Calatagan and lobby for the continuity of the council by the POs, fish wardens, and CERD as the NGO involved in the council.

5. The participation of a strong People's Organization is vital to the implementation of the CRMC as manifested by CERD's experience.

CRMC is supposed to be a venue for the GO, PO and NGO to unite and work together towards the rehabilitation and protection of the municipal waters. However, the POs in Lian and Nasugbu had a different view in dealing with the government. Thus, they did not see themselves as one with the government through the CRMC. This disunity led to the failure of the CRMC to convene.

CRMC in Calatagan continued through the CRMB. However, with the lack of skills on the part of the PO to assert its demands to the council, maximization of its participation in the CRMB to the interest of the fishers was not realized.

### *Recommendations*

1. Implementing guidelines should be included in the Memorandum of Agreement  
This is to avoid devoting extra effort to ground working and setting up of systems in the implementation of the council. Also, take into consideration the dynamics within the LGUs. They are busy in the preparation of report on the first month of the year and during elections.
2. LGUs work by pressure from the public. Constant follow-up by the POs and NGOs is needed especially in the preparatory/dialogue phase, where each group work to advance its interest in the council to be formed.
3. All possible members/representatives to the proposed council should be invited in the dialogue/conceptualization phase. This is to avoid repetition of orientation and leveling off during implementation phase.
4. The POs should be assisted through orientation and skills training. This is to help them effectively communicate and assert their interest in the proposed council, and understand the concept of tri-sectoral.
5. Any means to institutionalize CRMC as a permanent body is needed to ensure the continuity of the council even after the signatories to the Memorandum of Agreement has been replaced. This may be done through the passing of ordinance/resolution, or ensuring the turnover and orientation between incoming and outgoing officials.

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