

Protected Area Management Enhancement (PAME) in the Philippines

The rate of extinction of biological species is greater today than at any time in the last 65 million years. With the Philippines encompassing major biodiversity hotspots, the Protected Area Management Enhancement in the Philippines (PAME) Project aims to enhance the management of 60 existing Protected Areas (PAs) and establish 100 new terrestrial or marine PAs under different governance frameworks in selected Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

Context

The Philippines is home to more than 39,000 species of which 6,800 are endemic and found nowhere else on earth. More than 700 of these species are listed in the IUCN's *Red List of Threatened Species*.

In the last decade, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), civil society partners and scientists undertook a process of successively-refining available biological information to identify priority conservation areas, which are coined as KBAs. Habitat critical to the survival of globally threatened and geographically concentrated species, requires urgent conservation action.

Due to weak management and lack of formal governmental protection of the 228 terrestrial and marine KBAs, only 50 of the KBAs are legally protected. 137 of these still remain unprotected and 41 remains partially protected and are continuously degraded.

Approach

The establishment of protected areas is considered as the most cost-effective means for conserving genes, non-mobile species, habitats and ecological processes, and is also considered as one of the most important on-site tools for biodiversity conservation. In 1992, the Philippine Government signed and ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, which promotes the creation and effective management of protected areas. The Philippine government's *National Integrated Protected Area System* (NIPAS, Republic Act 7586) law was legislated in 1992 to respond to this urgent need.

However, the management of national PAs under NIPAS is facing major challenges, as some of its provisions are affected by other laws and its implementation is not supported with an adequate national budget. Even at the municipal levels, where the jurisdiction of PAs does not fall under the NIPAS law, many Local Government Units (LGUs) and communities face constraints in establishing and managing PAs due to limited funds, local politics and lack of technical manpower.

Priority areas usually lack quantitative data showing target or keystone species for immediate protection and conservation, and are subject to conflicts over natural resources by local communities and Indigenous People, especially those living in and around the protected areas. An "*In-Depth Review of the NIPAS Law and Related Statutes on the Establishment and Management of Protected Areas in the Philippines*," a joint study by GIZ and BMB-DENR (formerly PAWB) in 2011 included recommendations to reform the NIPAS Act.

In relation to international commitments, the Philippine Government has confirmed commitments to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar). The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in partnership with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) is implementing the Protected Area Management Enhancement (PAME) Project. It aims at significantly improving the protection and management of KBAs in



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Partners

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)

Target Groups

- Forest and coastal communities (including indigenous people) in selected key biodiversity areas
- Local government staff on all levels (provinces, municipalities and cities)
- DENR staff at national, regional and provincial levels

Duration

October 2012 - March 2017

Donor

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB)



the Philippines, as this approach enables interventions in already existing areas as well as those that will be established in future. Specifically, PAME aims to enhance the management of 60 existing protected areas (PAs) and to establish and implement at least 100 new terrestrial and/or marine protected areas by the end of 2016.

The project is also in line with the Philippine Strategy on Climate Change Adaptation developed by multi-stakeholders together with the DENR. Likewise, it also follows the Philippine National Plan of Action of the Coral Triangle Initiative. Both plans provided the basis for developing the Philippine Medium Term Development Plan 2011-2016, which calls on the improved administration and expansion of Protected Areas.

Key elements of PAME's assistance are:

- Institutional capacity development of DENR BMB (formerly PAWB);
- Comprehensive spatial planning in KBAs involving local governments, adjacent communities and indigenous people; thereby identification of new and confirmation of existing Protected Areas and buffer zones;
- Assessment and improvement of the Protected Area management effectiveness;
- Strengthened communication, education and awareness; and
- Promotion of equity and benefit sharing

Intended goals

- Improved management and technical capacities of relevant DENR BMB (formerly PAWB) staff at all levels, including needs-based reorganization of competencies;
- Improved PA governance / management in 60 existing terrestrial and marine protected areas in defined KBAs (by introducing improved planning, legal, financial and monitoring systems);
- Establishment of 100 additional protected areas under new innovative conservation governance systems (involving local governments and communities);
- Improved knowledge management through DENR BMB (formerly PAWB) and a heightened awareness for the value of biodiversity conservation for the general public

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GIZ is a federally-owned enterprise that supports the German government in the field of international development cooperation. For more than 30 years now, GIZ has been cooperating with Philippine partners in strengthening the capacity of people and institutions to improve the lives of Filipinos in this generation and generations to come. Together we work to balance economic, social and ecological interests through multi-stakeholder dialogue, participation and collaboration.