

PALAWAN Biosphere Reserve

Philippines' Last Ecological Frontier

ABOUT PALAWAN

- The largest province of the Philippines located in the westernmost side in the South China Sea
- Land area: 1.5 million hectares, comprising 1,700 islands
- Long and narrow mainland with sloping landform: 64% mountains and hills, and 36% lowlands for settlement and agricultural development.
- Rich fishery resources, excellent eco-tourism attractions, rich mineral deposits, productive & peace-loving people.
- Cradle to six (6) Protected Areas two of which are listed as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.
- Composed of 23 municipalities and one highly urbanized city
- About 1 million population, with a growth rate of 3.67%, higher than the average national growth, due largely to in-migration, comprising 39% natives and 61% migrants.



Tau-Bato (Cave Dwellers)



Batak women and children



Palawan children in school



Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park - A World Heritage Site

Palawan Bearcat

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- Management of Palawan as a Biosphere Reserve is anchored at Republic Act 7611 - The Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan Act (SEP Law) which was passed in June 19, 1992. A distinct legislation that aims for Palawan's sustainable development. SEP Law ensures the protection of Palawan's forests, watershed, preserve biodiversity, protect indigenous people and their culture, maintain maximum sustainable yield, protect rare and endangered species and their habitat, and provide areas for research, education, training, tourism and recreation.
- The Environmentally Critical Areas Network (ECAN) is the main strategy of the SEP Law. It is a graded system of protection and development control over the whole of Palawan including establishment of tribal ancestral zones.
- Through this zoning strategy, areas are wisely managed. Highly delicate areas are protected, maintained free of human disruption, and usable areas allowed for development activities.
- To support ECAN, Environmental Research, Monitoring & Evaluation and Education are pursued.
- ECAN zones maps have been adopted by the Local Government Units and now served as control map in approving and allocating land uses.
- The PCSD Clearance System ensures that all projects and activities in Palawan should pass the evaluation of PCSDS for their Clearance where conditions ensure that these projects will not have negative impacts to the environment.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Management of Protected Areas in Palawan in partnership with LGUs and Protected Area Management Board.
- Continuing conduct of Environmental Monitoring & Evaluation, Environmental Research and Environmental Education.
- PCSD Konek Program a "phone-texting" - based information arm for speedy action to community reports. In partnership with all enforcement agencies has organized the Multi-partite Quick Response Team to facilitate swift action to reports.
- Environmental Education integration in schools at all levels with the Department of Education and academe partners.
- Stakeholders' consultation by conduct of Conferences and Summits through partnership with the Provincial Government and other government agencies Palawan Biodiversity Program with Conservation Internationale.
- Community-based ECAN Learning Centers in partnership with the communities
- Community Based Coastal Resources Management in partnership with LGUs, World Wildlife Fund, FISH of the USAID, etc...
- Eco-watch program with the City Government.
- ECAN Zoning Component of the JBIC- funded Sustainable Environmental Management Project, which formulated ECAN Zoning Management Plans for Northern Palawan. A Pre-condition to the Northern Palawan Sustainable Tourism Development.
- Palawan Tropical Forestry Protection Programme (PTFFP) of the European Union, through: Establishment of Geographic Information System (GIS), Catchment Management Planning and Implementation, Agricultural & Livelihood Development, Institutional Strengthening and Environmental Awareness. This project directly affected lives of about 15% of the population.
- Sulu Sulawesi Seascape Project in partnership with Conservation Internationale.
- Ecology Week celebration with the Catholic Church via Apostolic Vicariate of Palawan.
- Support to LGU initiated Environmental programs such as "PISTA Y ANG KAGUEBAN"- tree planting festivity, Baragatan cultural festival of the Provincial Government, etc.
- For 2008, proposed installation of natural ECAN boundaries shall commence.

CULTURAL VALUES

- Rich cultural heritage with approx. 53 ethno-linguistic groups
- Major indigenous people (IPs): Batak, Tagbanua and the Pala'wan.
- Minorities: Cuyunos, Agutaynen, Cagayanan, muslims.
- Organized into Nagkakaisang Tribu ng Palawan (United Palawan Tribes) NATRIPAL.
- IPs consider environment their lifeblood, making a living from wild honey collection, minor forest products gathering, almaciga resin collection, also engage in fish and farming. However, lowland trading facilities affected the cultural practices of the IPs. Some have assimilated external influences.
- Through Government's Indigenous People's Rights Act (IPRA Law), and PCSD's ECAN, Ancestral Zones have been identified to facilitate issuance of Certificate of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADT) for the IPs.
- The ECAN Tribal Ancestral Zones cover both land and water areas.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Forest cover: 55.84% of its land area, an increase of 4% in 1992.
- Highly bio-diverse - contributing 38% to the country's total wildlife biodiversity with endemism placed at 5%
- Mangrove cover representing 40% of the Philippines mangrove forests is about 44,500 has. of 31 species.
- There are 13 species of seagrass, 379 species corals representing 81% and 82% of the known respective species in the Philippines.
- Protected Areas: Caluit Game Preserve & Wildlife Sanctuary, Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Ursula Island Game Refuge & Bird Sanctuary, El Nido - Taytay Managed Resource Protected Area, Tubtataha Reefs National Marine Park, Palawan Flora & Watershed Reserves, Malampaya Sound Protected Land & Seascape, and of late the Proposed Mt. Mantalingahan Protected Area. More Local Governments have been identifying areas to be declared as protected areas. Eventually, making Palawan Reserve a corridor of Protected Areas.
- Rich fishery resource: contributes to about 65% of commercial fish supply in Luzon, from its 176 fishing grounds.



Treeplanting



GIS-generated map



GPS-assisted site validation



Malampaya Natural Gas Project



Natural Tourist Spot: Kayangan Lake

GOVERNANCE

- The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) created by virtue of RA 7611 or SEP Law. Governs the implementation and policy direction for SEP in Palawan. It operates under the Office of the President of the Philippines.
- PCSD is a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary body composed of:
 - Members of the House of Representatives representing Palawan
 - Governor of Palawan
 - Deputy Director General of the National Economic & Development Authority
 - Undersecretary of the Department of Environmental & Natural Resources
 - Undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture
 - Mayor of Puerto Princesa City
 - President of Palawan's League of Municipalities
 - President of Palawan's Barangay's League
 - Executive Director of the PCSDS as Secretary
 - Representatives from the NGO, business, tourism, military, indigenous peoples and Police
- The Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) provides professional and technical support to the Council.
- Partners: Local Government Units, International funding institutions, NGOs, other Government Agencies, civic organizations, academe, church, enforcement agencies and the communities.
- As a policy making body, PCSD passed more than 300 resolutions and administrative orders and guidelines (for details, log on to pcsd.ph/resolutions)



Governance



Irrawaddy dolphins in Taytay



PCSD policy direction



Caluit Wildlife Sanctuary



Environment Conference



Fine resort in El Nido, Palawan



Kayangan Lake



Lush tropical forest



Exotic Islands



Friendly people



Rich fishing grounds



Old growth mangrove forest



Mangrove Paddle-Boating



Boobies in Tubtataha Reefs - A World Heritage Site



Ursula Island



Mousedeer in Caluit



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**Saving the biosphere,
sustain the future of Palawan**

