



**Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of
Fisheries *Refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand**

REPORT

**FISHERIES REFUGIA SITE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING:
BOLINAO SITE**

**PANGASINAN, PHILIPPINES
25 NOVEMBER 2021**

Prepared by
**NATIONAL FISHERIES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
PHILIPPINES**

**SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER
TRAINING DEPARTMENT**



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1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUOROM

The Hon Mayor Alfonso Celeste was not able to attend the meeting as he has a visitor from the office of the Department of Tourism related to the scheduled visit of the Secretary of Tourism in Bolinao. The Hon. Mayor was represented by the Municipal Administrator, Ms. Blesilda Domagas who presided the Meeting.

Having determined the quorum, the chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

2. INTRODUCTION

The chairperson welcome and acknowledged the participants of the meeting. After which she called the National Focal Point of the Project, Mr. Valeriano M. Borja to give his opening statement. Mr. Borja likewise acknowledge the presence of the participants and thanked them for attending the meeting in spite of the pandemic.

3. ADOPTION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The Chairperson presented the provisional agenda for the approval and adoption of the meeting. The provisional agenda was approved and adopted without any revision/additional topic concern to be discussed by the meeting. (Annex1).

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr. Noel C. Barut, Project Technical Advisor presented the minutes of the previous meeting to the committee members. He presented the minutes of the meeting line by line for the understanding and approval of the committee. After reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting, the body approved the meeting with minor revision. The Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries Hon. Joven Caasi suggested to the body that the draft minutes of the meeting should be forwarded to the members of the committee for their review one week before the scheduled meeting. In this manner the committee will have enough time to review the minutes of the previous meetings and at the same time will reduce the time in reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting during the meeting of the committee. The Secretariat of the Committee noted the suggestion of SB Caasi.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

a. Validation of the Refugia Site Profile Figures/Data

The National Technical Adviser of the project informed the meeting that the data/figure used in the fisheries profile was based on the 2015 Philippines Statistics Census as the Philippine Census on Agriculture and Fisheries is done every five years. He then inquired from the members if the 2020 census has already been released to update the figures/data used in the fisheries site profile. The members of the committee informed the meeting that the 2020 census is still being prepared and usually will take around two years or more than two years before it is officially released.

b. Boundary delineation and the priority species

A member of the site committee suggested to include the coastal waters of Barangay (Village) Patar in the proposed fisheries refugia site during the previous meeting. While the previous meeting approved the suggestion, the National Technical Adviser suggested that this issue be further discuss during the presentation of the National Guidelines on the Establishment and Operation of the Fisheries Refugia.

The meeting also confirmed that siganus sp. or locally known as “Barangen pusa” to be the priority species for management under the fisheries refugia project. The NFRDI project team suggested that the species be validated for proper identification using

DNA at the NFRDI Genetics laboratory. The NFRDI Project Team also confirmed to the meeting that the spawning ground of this species are located between the coastal waters of Barangay Luciente 1 and Barangay Lucero.

c. Preparation of Fisheries Refugia Management Plan

In finalizing the Fisheries Refugia Site Management Plan, the National Technical Adviser suggested that this matter be discussed in relation to the comments of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) one of the members of the Fisheries Refugia Management Committee. NEDA has some queries on the Fisheries Refugia Management Management Plan in relation to the other Fisheries Management Plan of the Local Government Units (LGU) such as MPA, CRM, ICRM, Sanctuary, etc. This will be discussed in the latter part of this report.

d. Review of Fisheries and Environmental Laws

The NFRDI Project Team (Secretariat) requested SB Caasi, copies of approved Ordinances, Resolutions, etc by the Local Legislative Body (Sanggunian Bayan) on fisheries and environment as well as other Municipal Ordinances on Disaster Risk and Reduction Management (DRRM) Plan, Gender and Development (GAD) Plan. The Meeting was also informed that the Consultant to review National and Local Policies have already been identified and contracted by the project.

e. Information Education and Communication (IEC) Materials

The NFRDI Project Team asked the meeting if the IEC materials previously agreed to be translated into local dialects for distribution to the coastal communities will still be the final decision of the committee. The SB on Agriculture and Fisheries suggested that instead of translating the IEC materials into local dialect, it is better to use Pilipino or Tagalog as the Coastal communities used different terminologies for the same species of fish. The Pilipino or tagalog term referring to a particular fish species is the same term for the whole country. The meeting then agreed to use Pilipino or tagalog for all the IEC materials of the fisheries refugia project.

f. Potential Source of Funds for Fisheries Management

The SB Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries said that they will discuss this matter internally during one of their Sanggunian Bayan (Local Legislative Body) regular Session.

6. NATIONAL GUIDELINES IN THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF FISHERIES REFUGIA FOR CAPTURE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

The National Technical Adviser for the Philippines presented the draft National Guidelines in the Establishment and Operation of Fisheries Refugia for Capture Fisheries. The draft guidelines included comments from the members of the National Fisheries Refugia Committee; The comments and recommendations of the **National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)** was included in the presentation during the meeting and quoted verbatim in this report such as:

a. On the interface of fisheries refugia with existing area-based management initiatives.

We suggest clarifying and elaborating further on how the fisheries refugia will interface with: (a) the Fisheries Management Areas (FMAs) of the Department of Agriculture – Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR); and (b) other area-based management initiatives, such as marine protected areas (MPAs) and fish sanctuaries. This is important to be considered to: (a) guide the stakeholders on the

difference between fisheries refugia and other related management strategies in terms of coverage, institutional arrangement, and management measures; and (b) ensure harmonization and avoid duplication with existing initiatives.

On the other hand, we suggest that the guidelines use the term 'fisheries refugia' instead of 'fisheries refugia sites' to ensure consistency with the regional definition of fisheries refugia. Adding 'sites' to the term is redundant as fisheries refugia already pertains to the coastal and marine area with specific management measures.

b. On Identification of Candidate Fisheries Refugia Sites (Section A, page 7)

Aside from the compilation of data for the identification of the sites, we suggest that the draft guidelines also provide the set of criteria that the local government units (LGUs) can adopt in selecting possible fisheries refugia. Consistent with the Regional Guidelines for Responsible Fisheries in Southeast Asia, 1 setting up set of selection criteria is among the requirements for developing fisheries refugia in a country.

The criteria should consider the existing management arrangements in the sites, the ecological significance of the area, and current threats affecting the sustainability of the fisheries and other resources present in the site.

c. On Convening of the Site Committee (Section B, Item 2, page 8).

Prior to the creation of a separate Site Committee that will oversee the fisheries refugia, we suggest tapping/using existing local committees dealing with coastal and marine, including fisheries concerns (e.g., local development councils) in the sites. This is to avoid the creation of committees that have similar and/or overlapping functions with existing ones. In cases that there are no existing local committees then the LGU can create the Site committee.

d. On Capacity Building of Local Institutions (Section D, Item 1, pages 10-11)

We suggest for the guidelines to provide the process of cascading the capacity building activities from the national to the local level instead of indicating capacity building activities needed for the establishment and operationalization of the fisheries refugia. The guidelines, as a document, should provide direction towards a more coordinated and strategic implementation of capacity building activities based on the capacity need communities and local institutions to ensure successful implementation of activities in fisheries refugia.

e. On Formulation and Adoption of Management Plans (Section 4, page 11)

Considering the possible similarities of the proposed Fisheries Refugia Management Plans with existing management plans in the sites (e.g., FMA Plans, MPA management plan, local development plans), we suggest that the guidelines provide clear direction and guidance for our LGUs on how better to integrate fisheries refugia management strategies to these existing plans instead. This is to reduce the number of plans to be developed at the local level and integrate similar initiatives and interventions to be implemented in the fisheries refugia.

f. On Monitoring and Evaluation (Section E, Item 4, page 12)

We suggest to include a results matrix in the guidelines, which will contain indicators, baseline values, targets, means of verification, and risks and assumptions. This results matrix will facilitate efficient monitoring and evaluation on the progress of activities implemented in the fisheries.

The above comments, suggestions were already addressed and incorporated in the revised guidelines by the project. The draft manuscript was sent back to NEDA for

their final comments. The Project is still awaiting the NEDA reply. The comments of the other members of the Fisheries Refugia Committee and the National Scientific and Technical Committee were mostly minor and some have been addressed with the comments and suggestions from NEDA.

7. FISHERIES REFUGIA MANAGEMENT PLAN

The national technical adviser also presented the draft Fisheries Refugia Management Plan (FRMP). In relation to the comments of NEDA in section 6 of this report, the FRMP needs to be aligned with the NEDA comments and suggestions. The Committee suggested that instead of having a separate fisheries refugia management plan and also in relation to the comments of NEDA, the committee agreed to include a section or addendum on Fisheries Refugia Management into the Water and Land Use Plan or into the Integrated Coastal Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) of the Municipality. This matter will be discussed during the regular session of the Sanggunian Bayan (Local Legislative Body), This will also facilitate for the easy approval of the fisheries refugia management plan.

Mr. Garcia, representative from the office of the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) suggested to include the budget of the fisheries refugia activities for 2022. The Chairperson of the meeting, Ms. Domagas, then reminded the Coastal Resource Management office (CRMO) and the Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) to include in their office budget proposal the budget for the refugia in the 2022 annual planning.

The Administrative Officer/Chairperson of the meeting also requested the CRM and MAO to regularly update the status of the implementation of the existing provisions of the plans particularly on regulations and prohibitions regarding the fishing operations during spawning season of certain fish species. The Municipality has an existing Ordinance on close fishing season for three months during spawning season of the managed identified fish species.

8. ESTABLISHMENT OF FISHERIES REFUGIA MANAGEMENT SITE-BASED VOLUNTEER TEAMS

The Committee identified the following Head of the different units in the Municipality to form the team in identifying members of the site based volunteers in the Fisheries Refugia Management Plan namely:

- Bantay Dagat for the Law Enforcement Team
- Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO) and Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) for the Public Education Team; and
- Municipal Planning and Development Coordinator (MPDC), Gender and Development (GAD), Municipal Cooperative and Development Office (MCDO) and Public Employment Service Office (PESO) for Livelihood Team

The volunteer teams shall also identify relevant training for their respective teams to properly execute their functions and responsibilities.

9. OTHER MATTERS/NEXT STEPS

There being no suggested concern/topic on other matters during the approval of the provisional agenda, the meeting then proceeded to close the meeting.

10. CLOSING STATEMENTS

The Chairperson on Environment and Fisheries Hon. Joven C. Caasi acknowledged the participants of the meeting, as well as project's initiatives and its potential impact on food security. He expressed optimism to be able to see more progress on the next meeting especially on the revision of the proposed refugia site delineation. On behalf of the Mayor, SB Caasi also acknowledged the project team for the continued support to Bolinao through the project and appreciated the institute's effort to provide IEC materials that would greatly benefit the fisherfolk in the municipality.

The National Scientific and Technical Focal Person likewise expressed his appreciation to the active participation of the refugia site committee members and look forward to a more fruitful collaboration with the Bolinao Local Officials and the Community as well. He then declared the adjournment of the meeting.

ANNEX 1**FISHERIES REFUGIA SITE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – Bolinao Site****Cris Del Mar Resort****25 November 2021****Program of Activities**

Time	Agenda
9:00 AM	Preliminaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opening Statement Site Com Member LGU Bolinao Valeriano Borja Project Leader, Refugia Project NFRDI
9:15 AM	Adoption of the Provisional Agenda
9:30 AM	Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
10:00 AM	Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting
10:45 AM	National Guidelines for the Establishment of Fisheries Refugia
11:15 AM	Refugia Management Plan
11:45 AM	Updates on the Establishment of Volunteer Teams
12:00 PM	Other Matters
12:20 PM	Closing Statements Site Com Member LGU Bolinao Noel Barut National Technical Adviser, Refugia Project

FISHERIES REFUGIA SITE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – Bolinao Site**Cris Del Mar Resort****25 November 2021****MEETING MINUTES****MEMBERS****Present:**

Local Government Unit (LGU)	
Mayor	Hon. Alfonso Celeste (represented by Ms. Blesilda Domagas)
Vice Mayor	Hon. Richard Celeste (Vice Chairperson)
SB Chair - Agriculture and Fisheries	Hon. Joven C. Caasi (Member)
SB Chair	Hon. Carolina M. Abad (Member)
SB Chair	Hon. Cyrus Evangelista (represented by Mr. Ritchie Rich Villareal)
Administrator	Ms. Blessilda R. Domagas (Member)
Municipal Agriculture Office (MAO)	Ms. Sonia F. Fernandez (represented by Mr. Florante P. Garcia)
BFAR 1 Regional Office	Ms. Segundina Gaerlan (represented by Ms. Margirie Asunto)
Philippine Coast Guard (PCG)	PCMS Alejandro S. Beltran (represented by PO3 John Flores)
Philippine National Police (Maritime)	represented by
Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic	Mr. Jesem S. Gabatin (Member)
Resources Management Council (MFARMC)	
Academe	Mr. Miguelito F. Gomez (Member)
People organization Representative	Ms. Annabelle S. Echavez (Member)

Absent:

Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO-DENR)

Guests:

Philippine Coast Guard	SN2 Michael Angelo Bora
National Scientific and Technical Focal Person	Mr. Valeriano M. Borja
National Technical Coordinator/Consultant	Mr. Noel C. Barut

Secretariat:

Science Research Specialist I	Ms. Raziel V. Ares
Science Research Analyst	Ms. Lilibeth C. Abina

FISHERIES REFUGIA SITE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – Bolinao Site

Cris Del Mar Resort

25 November 2021

Photo Documentation

