

EBM Perspectives

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EBM Perspective:

1. Scaling Up Grassroots Capacity for EBM in the Philippines

By Fernando Tiburcio and Paul Watts

In the Philippines, EBM stems from a grassroots approach supported by national economic conditions and responsive multilevel leadership. Given ongoing implementation of marine management, it may be that local-level institutions are in the best position to build capacity for EBM in this country.

Philippines culture and leadership

The archipelagic nation of the Philippines has a coastline that is more than 6,000 km longer than that of Africa's. Its population is rapidly surpassing 90 million and lives on just 300,000 km² of land. Dependence on marine fish for protein is without clear alternative, and fishing increasingly puts pressure on the Philippines' globally recognized biodiversity. Yet as a lesser-developed country, the Philippines has minimal government resources for EBM.

The Philippine Local Government Code of 1991 transferred responsibility and authority for nearshore management from the central government to 850 Municipal Local Government Units (MLGUs) that exist in the country's nearly 50 Provinces. These MLGUs are responsible for some 22000 coastal *barangays* - the country's smallest political unit.

Philippine NGOs and academic institutions provide ongoing facilitation in light of this decentralization: organizing fisherfolk, establishing MPAs, and providing supplemental livelihood assistance. These interventions have led to the formation of fisherfolk federations and alliances that actively supplement government in formulating and implementing coastal laws and management. Consolidation outward from the local fisherfolk communities acts to engage a broad range of society and builds both consensus and capacity for EBM.

One leadership initiative, *PAMANA Ka Sa Pilipinas* (PAMANA), involves a national alliance of community-based MPA managers. Begun in 1999 with support from the Haribon Foundation, PAMANA has over 120 community members. It is now engaged with larger ecosystem initiatives involving fisherfolk organizations and barangay councils, moving from its initial focus on MPAs to larger bay-wide coordination.

EBM in the Philippines is best developed through engagement of stakeholders to achieve consensus on common perspectives and environmental mandates. Fisherfolk challenges are a priority. The Philippine Senate Environment Chair, Loren Legarda, said recently that there is a "policy imperative to provide the necessary measures to enhance the restorative capacity of our ecosystems; to nurture nature, to bring our soil, seas, forests and mountains back to health and vibrancy." Senator Legarda also highlighted the need to focus support on fisherfolk leaders, particularly given that fish wardens sometimes sacrifice their lives in the dangerous job of enforcing fishing restrictions.

In one example of capacity-building through academia, Aurora State College of Technology (ASCOT) in Aurora Province engaged PAMANA in an initiative to scale up from local barangays, establishing a North Philippine Sea EBM approach in one of the Philippines' six marine bioregions. In the past decade ASCOT, in partnership with Volunteer Services Overseas (an international development charity), also initiated a province-wide coastal resources management program. The program links MPAs and fisherfolk interests in a network with assistance from USAID, the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, and the Philippine Ecogovernance Program.

Aurora Province has taken a leadership role on related population growth issues, initiating the first provincial reproductive

health care ordinance in the country. Through adult education on sustainable development, ASCOT is aiming to influence family planning, fisheries resource partitioning, and ecosystem management. A proposed EBM diploma/degree curriculum was developed to complement existing national fisheries programs and institutionalize fisherfolk consolidation outward from the local communities. The curriculum engages society and builds consensus and capacity at the marine bioregion level. Similarly, PAMANA's expansion of enhanced and sustainable EBM linkages and chapters furthers EBM.

Conclusion

Many synergistic activities have emerged from the engagement of civil society and academia in EBM: participatory monitoring, cooperative patrols, advocacy, lobbying and co-management. Such activities allow leaders to learn from each other's skills and experiences. Having unified and coordinated activities among fisherfolk is the best approach to EBM in the Philippines because it builds on the strength of local organizations.

Developing Philippine EBM capacity involves leadership, integrated outreach education, and active scaling up from the grassroots to the national and international level. Focusing facilitation and scientific research on grassroots beneficiaries ensures cultural linkages remain intact and creates optimal capacity for sustainability. PAMANA builds capacity for EBM, not to protect a place, but rather to protect culture and livelihoods, and the environment upon which both depend.

Many feel a primary challenge for building Philippine EBM capacity is the sustained operation of the PAMANA Secretariat, particularly to implement communication strategies. PAMANA links local views nationally, at the same time disseminating strategies to implement national EBM policies. This avoids an exclusively top-down approach. Within PAMANA, MPAs and EBM are not mere buzzwords, but rather the basis for stewardship for future generations, because "*ang dagat ay buhay natin*"...the sea is our life.

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2. Challenges In Capacity Building In Caribbean Small Island Developing States

By Lorna Innis

For many Caribbean small island developing states, marine EBM is an ideal, whereby the paths to success are defined and understood but the journey is often slow and arduous. Indeed as managers, technical officers, and government agencies begin to understand the ever-increasing range of disciplines required to achieve EBM in the long term, many countries incrementally reduce their expectations in order to match the skill sets and time available. Thus marine management is driven by what is realistically achievable rather than the maximum possible - EBM itself.

In the past, a mature EBM system might have aimed solely for maintenance of ecosystem integrity. But the current paradigm requires the enhancement of human well-being as well. Thus even more capacity development is required under the comprehensive new objectives that EBM comprises today. Capacity needs to be built correspondingly in areas such as resource economics and other social sciences.

The Caribbean Region

In the Caribbean region, EBM presents an even greater challenge to already-stressed human resource capability of small island developing states.

The member states bounding the Caribbean Sea represent dramatically different political, social, and cultural systems, further separated by a range of technical and technological capacities. Contrast the United States, or Mexico, and their approach to marine management, with the management capacity of an Antillean small island. The difference has not only to do with availability of funding for management, but also differences in availability of information, access to technology, strength of institutions, experience of personnel, existence of leadership, and political will.

Throughout the Caribbean Basin, the institutional arrangements for EBM vary from a well-funded and functioning Coastal Zone Management Unit and/or Fisheries Ministry in some countries, to an absence of any institutional support for EBM in others. The Caribbean Sea as a shared marine space, with shared living marine resources, would benefit greatly from a collaborative effort on the part of all bordering countries to achieve EBM. (The Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project, funded by the Global Environmental Facility, is an attempt to achieve this - see <http://cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/clme.html>.)

Incremental capacity development: Barbados

An ideal case for incremental capacity development in the Caribbean Region is Barbados, where coastal erosion had

emerged as an important issue. In response, the Government of Barbados first commissioned a baseline study to examine the capacity for protecting the country's beach resources. As understanding grew of the links between beach condition and coastal water quality or coral reef degradation, policy makers adopted an ecosystem-based approach to coastal zone management, with capacity development at its core. The Government identified human competency requirements, and laid out plans for institutions, legislation and policy. Steps included developing integrated coastal management institutions with clear lines of communication, staffed by individuals who had gone through good training programs. As a result, the country has succeeded in creating good capacity for coastal EBM.

However, even Barbados has its challenges. As in other countries, limited human and financial resources prevent Barbados from conducting adequate long-term planning to ensure sustained progress toward EBM. In addition, when small island governments invest in training officers in the different EBM disciplines, these individuals often migrate to jobs in regional or international organizations, as their former pay levels become less attractive once training is completed. This causes a leak of human capacity for continuing EBM efforts in their home countries. Retaining trained and committed individuals is not a problem unique to the Caribbean, of course, but it is acutely felt in the region.

An additional challenge: a plethora of international projects aimed at building capacity in small island developing states has produced well-trained technical officers, but these officers often have little or no actual authority to change policy or influence governance at their national levels. This political environment, coupled with lack of technology and instrumentation to conduct meaningful work, contributes to the leakage of capacity in the Caribbean small islands.

Conclusions

Leaders must be persuaded that effective EBM reduces a country's vulnerability to many pressures and hazards. By building ecosystem resilience, EBM enables:

- Consistent food production;
- Improvement of the tourism product;
- Protection against natural hazards;
- Greater resistance to negative effects of changing climate; and
- A solid basis for incremental improvement in the overall economy.

The nations of the Caribbean Region would benefit from a cooperative approach to developing marine EBM throughout the region, but local capacity needs to be increased as well. This requires continued international development assistance, but with incentives to encourage trained individuals to remain in the region and advance their own countries toward EBM goals. Capacity should be grown organically and incrementally, not built suddenly and left to rest on socio-politically shaky foundations. At the same time, political will needs to be strengthened, and leadership created, based on the realization that ecosystem health and economic health are vitally linked.

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