



Darwin Initiative/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2019)

Project reference	24-027
Project title	Applying business models to sustain socio-ecological resilience in coastal Philippines
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	Philippines
Lead organisation	Zoological Society of London
Partner(s)	Local Government Units of the Municipality of Ajuy & Concepcion in Iloilo Province; Local Government Unit of the Municipality of Ivisan, Province of Capiz; Local Government Units of the Municipality of Ibabay and Tangalan, Province of Aklan. Nigel Stansfield, President, EMEA, Interface Inc., UK
Project leader	Amado Blanco
Report date and number (e.g. HYR3)	HYR3
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.zsl.org ; www.net-works.com ; @heatherkoldewey @morefishlessplastic

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Below is a summary of progress we made during first half of Yr3.

Output 1 – Effective iMPAs. By end of Y2, we reported that two model iMPAs (i.e. Tambaliza and Punta Buri) in Ajuy-Concepcion bay-scape were legally established through municipal ordinances. Our focus in the first half of Y3 was legalisation of the proposed iMPA in Salvacion-Malangabang, Concepcion and advancing the two sites legalised in Y2 to full development, through the following interventions:

Strengthening the management structures. Mentoring and technical support were extended to the Tambaliza MPA management council (MMC) during their regular meetings. We facilitated the formation of the management council of Punta Buri iMPA in Ajuy, which was formalized through a mayor's executive order. We provided the management councils of the two iMPAs with technical guidance in the preparation of 5-year management plans. We assisted a people's organisation in Punta Buri, Ajuy formulate a strategic plan that is also aligned with its key roles in MPA management.

Building enforcement capability. We provided the newly-formed Punta Buri management council technical assistance in developing its MPA enforcement plan. Thirty-five management council and local enforcement team members from Tambaliza and Punta Buri completed Advance Fishery Law Enforcement Enhance Training Course, with a lawyer and a team from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources as trainers. The trainees are now eligible for deputation as fish wardens. Our team provided the local government unit of Concepcion, Iloilo follow-through mentoring and technical assistance in the implementation of the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool or SMART, which we are piloting in Concepcion.

Passage of municipal ordinance for third model site, i.e. Salvacion-Malangabang iMPA, has been protracted due to the local and national elections in May and commercial fishing opposition to the proposed spatial plan. Lobbying for ordinance enactment resumed in July, when newly-elected municipal officials were installed.

Resource accessing. We now have a formal collaboration with Oceana Philippines in promoting MPAs and ecosystem approach in fisheries management and coastal law enforcement training and reporting, *inter alia*. We also have a partnership with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative, primarily on raising awareness of artisanal fishers on their preferential use rights over fisheries resources within municipal waters, law enforcement capacity building, including para-legal training and environmental defence legal assistance.

Our field biologists performed the first post-declaration biological surveys in Tambaliza iMPA, which included reef rugosity, underwater fish visual census, mangrove community structure and seagrass surveys. We organized outreach activities to increase community support on their iMPAs, increase awareness on the issue of marine litter, and role of ecological seaweed farming in sustaining effective MPA management. Rapid habitat survey employing bucket view method was also done in the proposed iMPA site in Talotoan, Concepcion.

Output 2 – TURFs. The approved spatial plans of Tambaliza and Punta Buri iMPA have incorporated buffer and regulated use zones. The proposed Salvacion-Malangabang iMPA has total buffer and regulated use zones of 466 hectares. We now have standard building plan and cost estimate of the MPA guardhouse with seaweed drying platform. Construction sites in Tambaliza and Punta Buri have been identified and we have been working with the MPA management councils and municipal governments in securing tenure of the construction sites.

On top of the technical support from municipal engineers in planning and designing, the municipal mayors of Ajuy and Concepcion allocated £1,538 and £769, respectively, to support construction of guardhouses. We also accessed £1,538 from a USAID-funded project to procure marker buoys to delineate the no-take zone of Punta Buri iMPA. We have evolved a workshop design to define detailed implementing rules and regulations of the Tambaliza iMPA ordinance, including regulating access and use of TURFs zones. Our supervising biologist and M&E Officer trained with USAID-funded Fish Right project on fish catch monitoring. We are planning to pilot this catch monitoring method in Tambaliza once we have resolved the issue of cost. We have heard of anecdotes from local fishers in Tambaliza suggesting increase in fish catches and we are hoping to confirm this through catch monitoring.

Output 3 – Diversified Net-Works model. The 50 VSLAs we reported by end of Y2 continue collecting Environmental Fund (EF) contribution from members. We have a total of 13 active VSLA agents. Estimated total EF contributions as of Sep. 2019 was £3,713. Twenty-eight fishers in four fishing villages in Ajuy-Concepcion bay-scapes were trained on ZSL ecological seaweed farming approach. We engaged a top-notch Filipino seaweed scientist as technical advisor and lead trainer of the on-site seaweed farming skills training we organised. So far, nine fishers already received a total production loan assistance of £3,470 to engage in seaweed farming from a small grant we got from National Geographic Society. A total of 373 kg. of used fishing nets were collected from two fishing communities. Recycling of used fishing nets was replicated in Punta Buri, with a VSLA organized by a partner NGO as local trading partner.

Output 4 – Plan Vivo for blue carbon. We provided staff and social preparations support to Dr. Clare Duncan's project, which aimed to: Establish baseline carbon stocks and identify additionality quantification methodology; Review Philippines governance and tenurial systems facilitating blue carbon project creation; Consolidate ZSL Philippines monitoring data and identify potential paper outputs; Establish ZSL Philippines mangrove site monitoring systems and data management system needs; Establish collaborative linkages across Philippines-based blue carbon projects and science. This project helps in informing ZSL in identifying a more feasible blue carbon track.

Output 5 – Breaking donor dependence. In September, three team members trained with PHILEXPORT in the Fundamental of Exporting. We also supported the 11th Mangrove and Beach Forest Rehabilitation and Conservation Training of Trainers in support of ZSL's

advocacy for science-based mangrove rehabilitation. A writeshop was organized in May to advance the development of iMPA toolkit.

As indicated above, we trained (28 fishers) and financed production (9 fishers) in northern Iloilo as initial base of the Net-Works fairtrading of ecologically produced seaweeds. However, the moderate El Nino that the Philippines experience resulted to crop damage due to "ice-ice" and, as a consequence, shortage of planting materials.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

The enactment of municipal ordinance to legally declare the third model site (for co-managed set up) in Salvacion-Malangabang was delayed due to the May 2019 local and national elections and the lobby by the commercial fishing interest to reduce the size of no-take zone. This delay limited our ecological seaweed farming expansion plans in Ajuy-Concepcion bay-scape.

While the Philippines weather bureau declared that the warm sea surface temperature brought about by weak El Nino the Philippines experienced since the last quarter of 2018 started to transition to normal levels in July, the seaweed farms we assisted were impacted by "ice-ice". This condition sets in when sea surface temperature is high resulting to crop damage. The crop damage resulted in the unavailability of seedlings, and seaweed farmers in the pipeline were also hesitant to engage in farming because of the risks associated with the extended El Nino. This has impacted on our revenue generating capacity and meant that individual sites require a deeper level of investment, which has influenced our planned change request as highlighted in the review of the Year 2 annual report.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS: Yes/No We are finalising a change request to discuss with LTS in November.

Formal change request submitted: Yes/No We are finalising a change request to discuss with LTS in November.

Received confirmation of change acceptance Yes/No

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project, please submit a rebudget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a rebudget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

None.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R25 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request. **Please DO NOT send these in the same email.**

Please send your **completed report by email** to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk. The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 25-035 Darwin Half Year Report**