

Batangas ICM Goes Online with Web Development Training

BATANGAS CITY, PHILIPPINES -- The Batangas Provincial Government, is now able to share its knowledge on integrated coastal management (ICM) online, with the initial uploading of the Batangas Coastalink website last 27 May. The website was a direct output of the Training Workshop on Web Development, which was held from 24-27 May 2004, and organized by PEMSEA and the Provincial Government - Environment and Natural Resources Office (PG-ENRO).

The workshop trained eleven PG-ENRO staff on the basics of the internet, World Wide Web, and the existing/emerging tools and techniques used in web development; practical knowledge and skills on web production using specific software and tools; and strategies in website promotion and web community establishment. The participants were able to work step-by-step towards the creation of the Batangas Coastalink website as most of the exercise used actual information from Batangas Bay.

The training workshop was a first of a series of on-site training programs being organized by PEMSEA to assist its demonstration sites in establishing their own presence on the Internet, providing each demonstration site with a new means of sharing their lessons and experiences in environmental management to a much wider online audience. The creation of ICM websites, referred to as Coastalinks, is also aimed at strengthening regional networking and parallel knowledge sharing on the East Asian seas. Coastalink websites will be launched simultaneously on 18 September in time for the celebration of World Cleanup Day.

Nampho Develops Coastal Environmental Profile

NAMPHO, DPR KOREA -- The national integrated coastal management (ICM) demonstration site in Nampho, DPR Korea has developed a coastal environmental profile to enhance effective management of its coastal and marine resources. The profile provides information on the present environmental situation of Nampho, identifies data gaps, and allows for a more rational development, use and management of the Nampho coast.

Developed by the Nampho Land Planning and Designing Office with assistance from the People's Committee of Nampho City and PEMSEA, the profile was a product of years of development and consultation, and began with an environmental profiling workshop held last 2-3 September 2002 in Nampho City. The workshop was considered to be the first national workshop in Nampho, which brought together national and local stakeholders to share information on Nampho's coastal and marine environment.

Nampho is home to the country's largest international maritime port as well as the West Sea Barrage, an engineering feat that serves to close the Taedong River estuary as a reservoir for drinking water and irrigation. Nampho is also emerging as the largest aquaculture center in the country. With the increases in use of Nampho's marine and coastal resources, the need to protect the environment of the Nampho coast is becoming more apparent. The profile comes as a timely guide to assist the Nampho government in addressing its coastal and marine issues.

Australia and PEMSEA Future Partners for SDS-SEA Implementation

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA -- PEMSEA's Regional Programme Director, Dr. Chua Thia-Eng, undertook a 10-day visit to Australia this May to introduce PEMSEA and the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA) to government agencies, research institutions and the private sector, and to develop partnerships for the implementation of the SDS-SEA.

While in Canberra, Dr. Chua met with officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian International Development Agency, the Department of Environment and Heritage, the National Ocean Office, and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

In Townsville, he held dialogue with research scientists from the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and officials of the Corporate Research Corporation (CRC) on Reef and International Marine Projects Activities Center (IMPAC). Vice Mayor Ann Bunnell received Dr. Chua into Townsville where he also met with officials from the Port of Townsville and the business representative from the mining sector.

While in Melbourne, the Regional Programme Director gave a talk to representatives from the Victoria State. Key personalities from the Department of Sustainability and Environment attended the briefing including the Secretary Prof. Lynsay Neilson; Dr. Ian McPhail, Commissioner for Sustainability; Dr. Rod Gowans, Executive Director for Biodiversity; Ms. Diane James and Mr. John Ginivans, Victoria Coastal Council's Chair and Executive Director, respectively. Other personalities from Victoria Park, the Central and Western Board, Fisheries, Catchment Council, and international relations also attended the talk by Dr. Chua.

One of the meeting's outcomes was the agreement to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between PEMSEA and the Department of Sustainability and Environment of the Victoria State to formalize future collaborative activities.

The visit has created better understanding of the objective, operation and achievements of PEMSEA and the purpose, framework and platform of the SDS-SEA, which can serve as an over-arching framework for future collaboration with Australia. Several potential areas for collaboration being discussed include the effective management of MPAs, the support of the PSSA initiative for the Sulu-Celebes Seas, the development of a coastal and marine curriculum for school children, and the holding of leadership seminars.

Cambodia Task Team Conducts Oil Spill Workshop

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA -- Awareness and understanding on oil spill preparedness, response and management were heightened in Cambodia when twenty-one participants, many of whom were senior officials from government agencies and oil companies, participated in PEMSEA's Workshop on Oil Spill Preparedness, Response and Management.

The workshop was held on 6 May and was organized and conducted by the National Project Task Team of the PEMSEA Gulf of Thailand Project in Cambodia. The team is composed of members belonging to different government organizations such as the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, the Ministry of Environment, Port Autonome De Sihanoukville, and the Cambodian National Petroleum Authority.

Ministry of Public Works and Transport Undersecretary, H.E. Kep Than opened the workshop and emphasized his appreciation for PEMSEA's support and called the participants to actively participate.

The participants indeed prove active, and many questions were raised in the discussions regarding recovery of clean-up costs, who pays for the damage and the state of existing local legislation. The participants agreed to cooperate in data and information gathering and sharing. They also agreed to participate in future activities related to the development of a national contingency plan.

The workshop increased the awareness and understanding of relevant agencies on the requirements and benefits derived from international instruments ratified by Cambodia, specifically, the CLC and FUND Convention, MARPOL 73/78 and the OPRC Convention. The workshop also provided participants with an understanding on the relevance of establishing a national response mechanism for oil spills. Networking among relevant agencies was also strengthened.

Manila Bay Aims for Efficient Access of Information through Information Network

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE, PHILIPPINES -- Manila Bay stakeholders held a workshop to discuss the viability, benefits and costs of establishing a Manila Bay Area Information Network (MBIN), in support of the Manila Bay Environmental Management Project. From their vision of the network, the MBIN aims to enhance sharing of information among research institutions, academe, government and private sectors, and provide access of such information among data providers and users. The applications of MBIN are expected to result in more efficient and effective management of Manila Bay coastal and watershed areas.

The stakeholders workshop was held on 29-30 April at the Clark Special Economic zone in the Province of Pampanga, and which was participated by 33 representatives from different agencies, institutions and local government units.

Part of the workshop was also a formation of an MBIN Technical Working Group (TWG) consisting of representatives from government agencies, research institutions and private sector. The TWG is tasked to serve as a clearing house for technical, organizational and procedural aspects of the network, provide necessary technical inputs and implement the network with the assistance of an expert group.

The Terms of Reference outlining the essential steps and components in designing, developing and testing a pilot MBIN were finalized in the workshop. Through the network, it is expected that existing information systems, including the Integrated Information Management System (IIMS) will be linked with each other so members will be able to access needed information as well as input and share their data. Once the pilot MBIN proves to be successful, a full-scale MBIN will be developed and implemented, which may involve more members from the national and local government, research institutions, and private and non-government sectors.

Training Workshop on Resource and Environmental Valuation for Manila Bay Area

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE, PHILIPPINES -- Representatives from various regional and national government agencies and local government units enhanced their knowledge and skills in conducting resource and environmental valuation after participating in PEMSEA's Training and Inception Workshop on Resource and Environmental Valuation for the Manila Bay Area.

The training workshop, held from 30 March to 2 April, resulted in the appreciation of the participants' respective roles in the Manila Bay Environmental Management Project (MBEMP), particularly in resource and environmental valuation, and its link with the oil spill contingency planning, integrated environmental monitoring and risk management. The increased awareness of including the values of resources and the environment in planning, policy-making and decision-making in the respective agencies, and in the current work of the participants were likewise achieved.

The 30 participants came from various regional and national government agencies, like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Tourism (DoT), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), National Mapping Resource and Information Agency (NAMRIA), and National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), and 3 local government units (LGUs) namely Pampanga, Bulacan and Cavite.

Consistent with PEMSEA's approach of providing participants with the opportunity to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills, the participants were convened to form the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the component activity of MBEMP. The TWG is tasked to provide technical assistance and information and facilitate data gathering in support of the work of the consultants.

PEMSEA Partnership Efforts Spark Interest in Cairns H2O Conference

CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA -- PEMSEA's on-the-ground efforts on building partnerships for the sustainable development of coasts and ocean in the Seas of East Asia were shared during the Global H2O Partnership Conference, capturing the attention of many of its participants and sparking interest in future PEMSEA collaboration.

PEMSEA Senior Programme Officer, Mr. S. Adrian Ross, gave a presentation on integrating water resource and coastal area management through partnerships. The end of the presentation saw a healthy reaction from participants, who were keen in understanding the nature of partnerships that PEMSEA is establishing at the local government level and on the application of the integrated coastal management framework and process to address different environmental issues at the local level.

Key points from the session discussions reveal that:

Putting partnerships for the protection of coastal and marine environments on the political agenda is not as difficult as implementing the agenda;

Win/win arrangements between stakeholders and partners involved in the use and protection of both freshwater and coastal resources should be given emphasis;

There is a need to create a platform for the strategic involvement of stakeholders in the protection of water resources and the integrated of coastal and marine management with watershed management at the local, national and regional levels;

To ensure successful partnerships, brokers should (i) focus on the central issues; (ii) include the appropriate partners; (iii) promote exchange of knowledge and develop a language of understanding; and (iii) facilitate attitudes of patience, cooperation and mutual benefit.

Over 100 participants attended the conference in Cairns, which was held from 10-14 May. The conference brought together policy makers, industry representatives, non-government organizations, academics and other experts to share expertise, experience and solutions to the problems of marine pollution. The five-day event was organized by the United Nations Environment Programme Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities and hosted by the Department of the Environment and Heritage, Australia.

PEMSEA Shares Experiences in APEC Working Group Meeting

PUERTO VARAS, CHILE -- PEMSEA efforts on the integrated management of coastal areas and sub-regional seas were shared during the 17th APEC Marine Resource Conservation Working Group (MRCWG) Meeting held last 7-8 May. PEMSEA Regional Programme Director, Dr. Chua Thia-Eng participated in the meeting at the invitation of the Lead Shepherd, Ms. Donna Petrachenko of Canada.

In his presentation, Dr. Chua also highlighted the development and endorsement of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA). The East Asian Seas Congress 2003 video shared by Dr. Chua was also well received by the MRCWG.

The MRCWG discussed issues on regional alliances with regional organizations and programmes. The Working Group recognized their complementarities especially relating to the major objectives of the Seoul Ocean Summit Declaration. The MRCWG Meeting was also attended by the secretariat of the Comision Permanente del Pacifico Sur.

Several areas of future collaboration between APEC and PEMSEA were discussed, including the linkages of websites, and opportunities for training courses.

During the meeting, Dr. Chua extended invitations for the APEC economies to participate in existing PEMSEA training courses on integrated coastal management, integrated environmental impacts assessment, and integrated coastal management study tours in the PEMSEA demonstration site in Xiamen, China.

MRCWG is an APEC Working Group established in 1990 to protect the collective marine resource. The main task of the MRCWG is in implementing the Action Plan on Sustainability of the Marine Environment. Progress is being made in this project, and APEC Member Economies are seen to benefit from the socio-economic and environmental gains resulting from this initiative.

PEMSEA Welcomes New Staff

QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES -- PEMSEA welcomes Mr. Rommel Caballero, Ms. Kathrine Rose Gallardo and Mr. Joselito Guevarra, as new staff.

Mr. Rommel Caballero is IT Specialist. Rommel has a degree in Computer Science from AMA Computer College and has had four years of solid IT experiences in business software analysis, design, development and implementation and local area network administration.

M. Kathrine Rose Gallardo is Technical Assistant. Kate has Masters degree in International Studies from the University of the Philippines and was an Executive Producer and Segment Producer for IBC 13 News and Public Affairs Department prior to joining PEMSEA.

Mr. Joselito Guevarra is Technical Officer. Jojo earned his Masters of Science degree in Environmental Management from the National University of Singapore and has had extensive work experience as Research Associate with various international organizations.

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