

PRA, RHDHV lays groundwork for Coastal Management Strategy Roadmap in Catanduanes



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In fulfillment of its mission to promote coastal protection and resilience, the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) initiated the formulation of a Roadmap towards a Coastal Management Strategy for the municipalities of Baras and Virac in Catanduanes on May 09-16, 2021.

With support from the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (NEA) — RVO, through the Netherlands Embassy in the Philippines, the Netherlands government contracted the services of Royal HaskoningDHV (RHDHV) to provide technical assistance for the development of a Coastal Management Strategy.

The Disaster Risk Reduction team (DRR) is led by Mr. Jan-Willem Nell of Royal HaskoningDHV in a joint effort with the Philippine Reclamation Authority, through its Environmental Management Department - Reclamation and Regulation Office, composed of Atty. Joseph John M. Literal (Assistant General Manager), Engr. Elizabeth S. Mendoza (Department Manager), Engr. Mark John D. Pineda, Adrian P. De Jesus, Mary Kristine R. Dator, and Hannah Jane P. Atole.

Developing a Coastal Management Strategy (CPS) initiative

Establishing a Roadmap towards a Coastal Management Strategy (CPS) is grounded on staunch efforts of PRA to strengthen the capacity of its stakeholders in times of adversity. Particularly, in addressing the need to safeguard the municipalities of Baras and Virac,

and its communities, from future coastal hazards. This is supported with the approval of the PRA Board to include the Municipality of Baras, alongside the Municipality of Virac in the same province, in the list of ten (10) vulnerable areas prioritized to be assisted by PRA in the formulation of their respective Coastal Protection Strategies.

According to PAGASA, an average of four typhoons every year pass through Bicol Region where Catanduanes is located. In November 2020, the onslaught of Super Typhoon Goni (known locally as Rolly) destroyed 90 percent of the infrastructure and some 13,000 homes, based on a report published on the website of RHDHV. The Super Typhoon sustained winds of 195 mph at its peak making it as the strongest landfalling tropical cyclone on record. This is based on one-minute average wind speeds from the National Hurricane Center (NHC) and Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC). The record was previously held by Super Typhoon Meranti (known locally as Ferdie) in 2016 and Super Typhoon Haiyan (known locally as Yolanda) in 2013, which both made landfall with 190 mph winds. In the same report, Catanduanes dealt with intensive rainfall and destructive storm surge brought about by Typhoon Surigae (Bising) on April of this year.

Preparation of the Roadmap towards a Coastal Management Plan for Virac and Baras

To develop the Coastal Management Strategy Roadmap, the DRR team conducted several site visits, extensive stakeholder consultations, and preliminary data collection in Baras and Virac as part of the initial phase of the three stages of crafting a Coastal Management Strategy.



(House-to-house interview with residents of coastal communities in Baras and Virac)

The conduct of extensive consultation from affected coastal communities, local government officials, to national and regional government agencies in crafting policies and projects is reflective of PRA's quality policy to be inclusive and deliberative in practice.

Both municipal mayors of Baras and Virac, including the provincial governor, pledged full support and expressed appreciation of the initiative in separate courtesy calls. The forthcoming Coastal Management Strategy Roadmap is envisioned to provide a long-term coastal zone management plan and disaster risk reduction measures in Catanduanes.

Stakeholder consultations and site visits in Virac and Baras

The DRR team held successful stakeholder consultations and meetings in Virac at Queen Maricel Inn and in Baras at Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction (MDRRM) Building Operations Center on May 11 and May 14, 2021, respectively.



(Photos during the stakeholder consultation and meeting in Virac at Queen Maricel Inn on May 11, 2021)



(Photos during the stakeholder consultation and meeting in Baras at MDRRM Building Operations Center on May 14, 2021)

Among the participants were local government officials, barangay captains, municipal engineers, head of the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council (MDRRMC), and other representatives from national and regional government agencies like the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA).

Through the consultations, discussions about hazards on coastal flooding, waves, wind impact, river flooding, and climate change led to the identification of priority areas for assessment. Aside from holding consultations, some members of the DRR team conducted site visits and house-to-house surveys in several coastal communities.



(Site visit in Barangay Benticayan, Baras)



(Site visit in Barangay Eastern Poblacion, Baras)



(Site visit in Barangay Ginitligan, Baras)



(Site visit in Barangay J.M. Alberto, Baras)



(Site visit in Barangay Concepcion, Virac)



(Site visit in Barangay Marilima, Virac)



(Site visit in Barangay Gogom, Virac)



(Site visit in Barangay Antipolo del Norte, Virac)

Towards the second phase of the Coastal Management Strategy, a master plan will be developed to minimize the impacts of natural hazards brought about by typhoons and

flooding, thereby institutionalizing coastal resiliency. It spans across the creation of clear guidelines on the development of programs, activities, and projects, to the practice of reducing risk of coastal and fluvial flooding, storm surge and tsunami, while enhancing sustainable development of coastal areas. While project execution, as the final stage of Coastal Management Strategy, threads on integrating hard and soft measures in consideration with the priorities and experiences of communities.

In service of its stakeholders and the Filipino people, PRA proves its commitment to enable coastal communities with best practices and strategies derived from extensive consultation and sound environmental policies with the development of a Coastal Management Strategy Roadmap.

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