information management: the key to successful implementation

Updated and quality information is a critical component in coastal resource management, and forms the basis of any planning or decision-making process. It is therefore essential that relevant and good, if not the best, quality information and data are available to coastal LGUs.

The CRM process begins with the collection of information and an assessment of the current status of and issues on the coastal environment. From this base line, certain objectives and priorities may be identified before formulating an action plan. The process is repeated after the first cycle of plan implementation has been assessed or evaluated.

At the community level, this process may involve a participatory coastal resource assessment, coastal resource management planning, organizing and implementing marine patrols, and establishing marine sanctuaries. At the provincial level, this may include identifying the status of the municipalities, and the CRM priorities and plans. Monitoring and evaluation are done in both levels.

STANDARDIZATION

With so many organizations involved in coastal resource management, a standard approach for information and data management is required. This will enable a common basis for comparison of information and reduce repetition of effort. Obviously, this requires cooperation and sharing of resources and information between and among the various CRM practitioners in the province.

Municipal Coastal Database

Governor Erico B. Aumentado attending workshop training for all coastal LGUs of Bohol on how to use the MCD. Shown with CRMP training head, CRMP Chief of Party and Bohol Provincial Coordinator.

The Municipal Coastal Database (MCD) was developed by the USAID-funded DENR-CRMP. It was designed to help simplify and standardize information management at the municipal level for CRM activities. The MCD enables coastal municipalities and cities to manage data and information on all aspects of CRM including budgeting, institutional development, local legislation, regulatory measures, and biophysical data. The MCD aims to provide municipal LGUs with a framework for assessing their performance and for planning. It also provides a holistic view of the CRM status of all coastal municipalities.

The Provincial Government has adopted the MCD and is currently facilitating the collection and validation of data from every coastal municipality. The LGUs are given free access to all the information that is based at the BEMO.

Natural Resources Database

The Provincial Government through the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) and the BEMO has developed the Natural Resources Database (NRDB), a major component of the natural resources center. Its primary objective is to provide centralized information for environmental management in Bohol. This database will be used for setting CRM priorities, planning, implementation and monitoring of the programs facilitated by or undertaken with the BEMO. Like the MCD, it shall be made available and accessible to all development partners in the province and, in the future, to interested parties from other provinces.

The NRDB consists of three components, namely, the Municipal Coastal Database, Upland and Watershed Resources Inventory, and Solid Waste Management Status. Profiles of the status of these components will be published periodically. In addition, data from the province's Environment Management Systems will be incorporated.

The Provincial Government has already signed MOAs with provincial offices, NGAs and NGOs for the coordinated establishment and management of the MCD and NRDB. These agreements involve the following:

- Preparation of digital base maps with the Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC);
- Agriculture profiling for food security with the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist (OPA); and
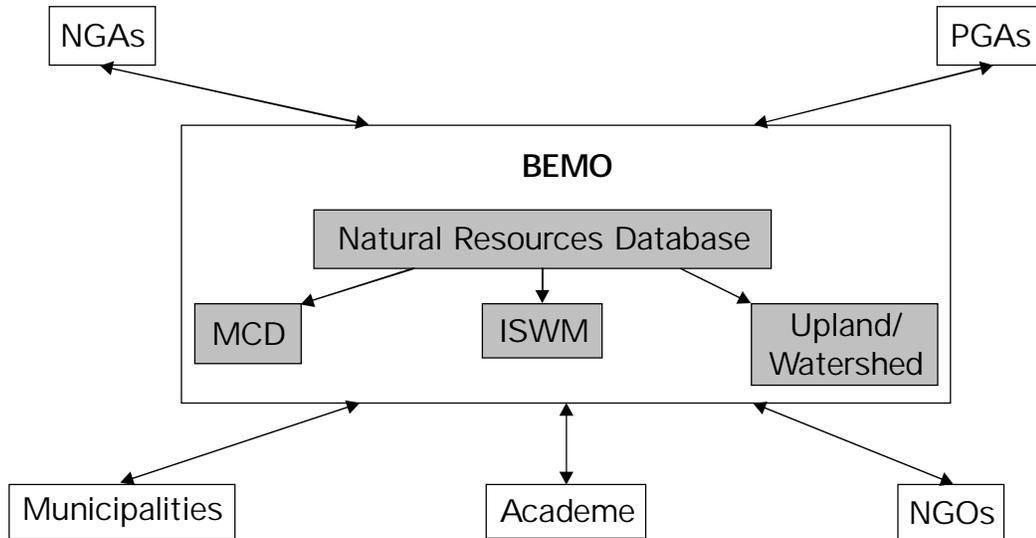- Identification of details on land classification and protected areas with the DENR.

Figure 7.1. Provincial information flow

Recommendations

- All LGUs and NGOs should be encouraged to use the NRDB for various developmental purposes.
- Data collection methodologies should be standardized and systematized.
- As laid down in the Bohol Environment Code of 1998, NGAs should provide the NRDB all available pertinent information.
- New projects and funding institutions should consider working with the BEMO and developing further their information management systems.
- All new projects and activities in the province should be encouraged to utilize, validate, and update the NRDB.
- All LGUs should use the MCD and submit hard/file copy of their updated data by January of each year for incorporation into the provincial MCD.

Box 7.1. Features of the Provincial Natural Resources Information Center of Bohol

> Part of the role of the Bohol Environment Management Office (BEMO), which is a leading advocate of environmental education and assists and coordinates with other organizations in environmental management, is the development and maintenance of the Natural Resources Center as a venue for information and equipment relating to all programs of the BEMO.
>
> The resource center is primed up to address the following issues and problems:
>
> 1. Lack of environmental consciousness at all levels of society
> 2. Dearth of IEC materials and facilities
> 3. Absence of a clear direction for IEC in the province

Box 7.1 continued

4. Lack of environmental advocacy group
5. Lack of concerted effort to promote CRM-based IEC
6. Poor extension/outreach activities
7. Lack of dissemination of best practices

Given the above issues and problems, there is a need to put up a Bohol Natural Resources Center to cater to the demands of the various clientele groups in terms of research and extension.

The objectives of the center are as follows:

1. To develop a centralized environmental IEC center
2. To establish linkages with the people and media
3. To develop standardized environmental IEC materials for the province
5. To establish an IEC database
6. To acquire equipment for IEC activities
7. To provide technical assistance
8. To develop a pool of trainers and/or directory of provincial resource persons
10. To develop a provincial IEC core group

The following facilities shall be established to meet the center's objectives:

1. Social Marketing Unit
   - To reach all requesting and priority *barangays* within two years
2. Quick Response Desk
   - To disseminate information through various media channels
3. Database
   - To produce updated information and profiles for various clientele groups
4. Mini-library
   - To provide information materials for research, extension and other purposes
5. Exhibit Area
   - To provide pertinent information through multimedia presentations
6. Training Unit
   - To serve as depository for all training kits, briefing materials and related support tools including directories of trainers and technical experts
7. IEC Core Group
   - To set IEC directions, develop an IEC system, and provide outreach/extension services
8. Project Documentation and Publication Unit
   - To document best practices and develop them into appropriate packages

CRM CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

At the provincial level, part of its monitoring and evaluation of CRM activities within every coastal municipality is the implementation of the CRM Certification System. The CRM Certification System establishes benchmarks for effective CRM at the municipal and city levels. Coastal municipalities and cities must conduct annual monitoring and evaluation of their CRM plans and programs for evaluation and validation by organized multi-sectoral and multi-institutional groups at provincial and regional levels. Once a coastal municipality is "CRM-certified", more prospective development partners will invest in their area. Furthermore, national government agencies have committed to prioritize "CRM-certified" municipalities for investment.

To implement the certification system, the Provincial Government, through a MOA, has established a multi-sectoral Provincial CRM Certification Technical Working Group (PCRMC TWG), composed of:

- one representative from the BEMO (which acts as the main secretariat);
- the Provincial Director of the DILG;
- the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer of the DENR; (chairperson)
- the Provincial Fishery Officer of the BFAR;
- the Chairperson of the Sub-committee on CRM or representative from the Special Projects Unit of the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* (SP);
- one representative from the League of Municipalities of the Philippines-Bohol Chapter;
- one representative of each of the three Coastal Law Enforcement Councils (CLECs);
- the Executive Director of the Bohol Alliance of Non-Government Organizations (BANGON);
- one representative from the BIPC;
- the Provincial Agriculturist of the OPA; and
- one representative from the Coastal Resource Management Project (CRMP) (coterminus with project).

MTPDP* GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND RECOGNITION BASED ON LGU PERFORMANCE

CRM Certification

*MTPDP - Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan
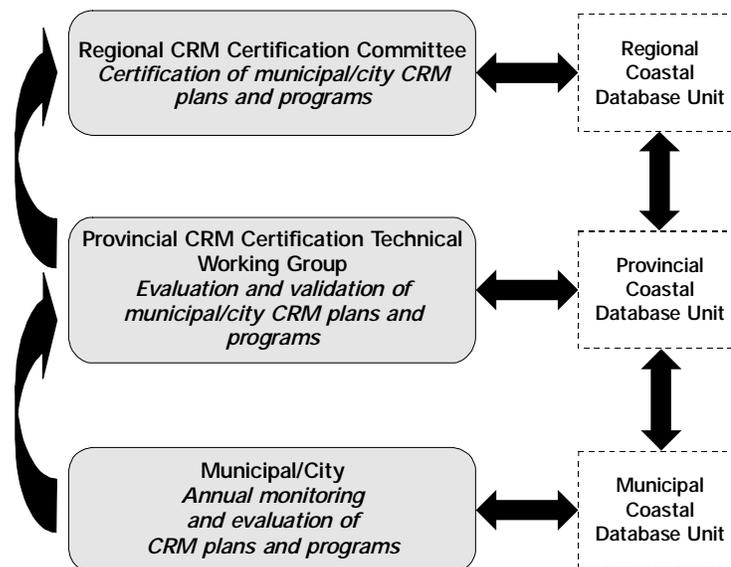
Figure 7.2. CRM Certification System

Figure 7.3. Flow of CRM Monitoring and Evaluation

The PCRMC TWG is tasked with the evaluation and validation of monitoring and evaluation reports submitted by each municipality. After evaluation and validation, the PCRMC TWG endorses the municipality's certification application to the Regional CRMC Committee.

Mayor Jumamoy proudly shows off the Certificate for CRM Certification of LGU-Inabanga. With her is Gov. Erico B. Aumentado, Frank Donovan (USAID), Dr. Catherine Courtney (CRMP Chief of Party), Marius Corpus (DILG Undersecretary), Gov. Rodolfo del Rosario (LPP President), Vice Gov. Julius Ceasar F. Herrera, Gerardo Cuadrasal (VGO), Stuart J. Green (CRMP Provincial Coordinator), Anecita Gulayan (CRMP Technical Assistant) and Nunila Pinat (BEMO Deputy Head).

The PCRMC TWG will also provide assistance and training in participatory monitoring and evaluation to coastal LGUs interested in applying for CRM certification. Coastal municipalities interested in CRM-certification must follow the "Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation of CRM Plans and Programs for CRM Certification" which describes the process and benchmarks for CRM certification. As of publication, Inabanga was the first LGU to be certified in the whole of Region VII.

Box 7.2. CRM Benchmarks for Local Government Units

Beginning CRM Level One (I) - Indicators Framework

- Budget allocated for CRM
- Municipal FARMC formed and active
- Multi-year CRM Plan drafted (5 years)
- Appropriate CRM best practices planned and initiated (at least 2-3)

Intermediate CRM Level Two (II) – Indicators Framework

- MFARMC strong and active
- Multi-year CRM Plan finalized and adopted
- Municipal ordinance supports plan/CRM code
- At least two CRM best practices implemented
- Coastal law enforcement effective
- Financial and human resources assigned permanently to CRM activities

Advanced CRM Level Three (III) – Indicators Framework

- Sustained long-term implementation of CRM with monitoring, measured results and positive returns
- Bio-physical improvement in resources measured (i.e. increase in coral cover or fish abundance)
- Socio-economic benefits accrued to coastal residents (i.e. actual increase in livelihood within the communities)
- Illegal activities totally minimized
- Annual budget based on results of monitoring and Municipal Coastal Database

CRM PLAN INTEGRATION with CLUP and ANNUAL INVESTMENT PLAN

One component of CRM implementation, as outlined in the Bohol Environment Code of 1998, is the implementation of municipal coastal zoning alongside the preparation of a ten-year Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP). The Coastal Zoning Plan should be prepared under a CRM planning process. The CLUP should be integrated in the Coastal Zoning Plan.

LGUs should also include the coastal zone when preparing annual investment plans. In coastal municipalities, a large proportion of the population is dependent on the coastal resources and, thus, investment should ensure effective management of the resources therein.

The following framework presents the integration of the Municipal and Provincial CRM Plans into the National Medium-Term Program Development Plan.
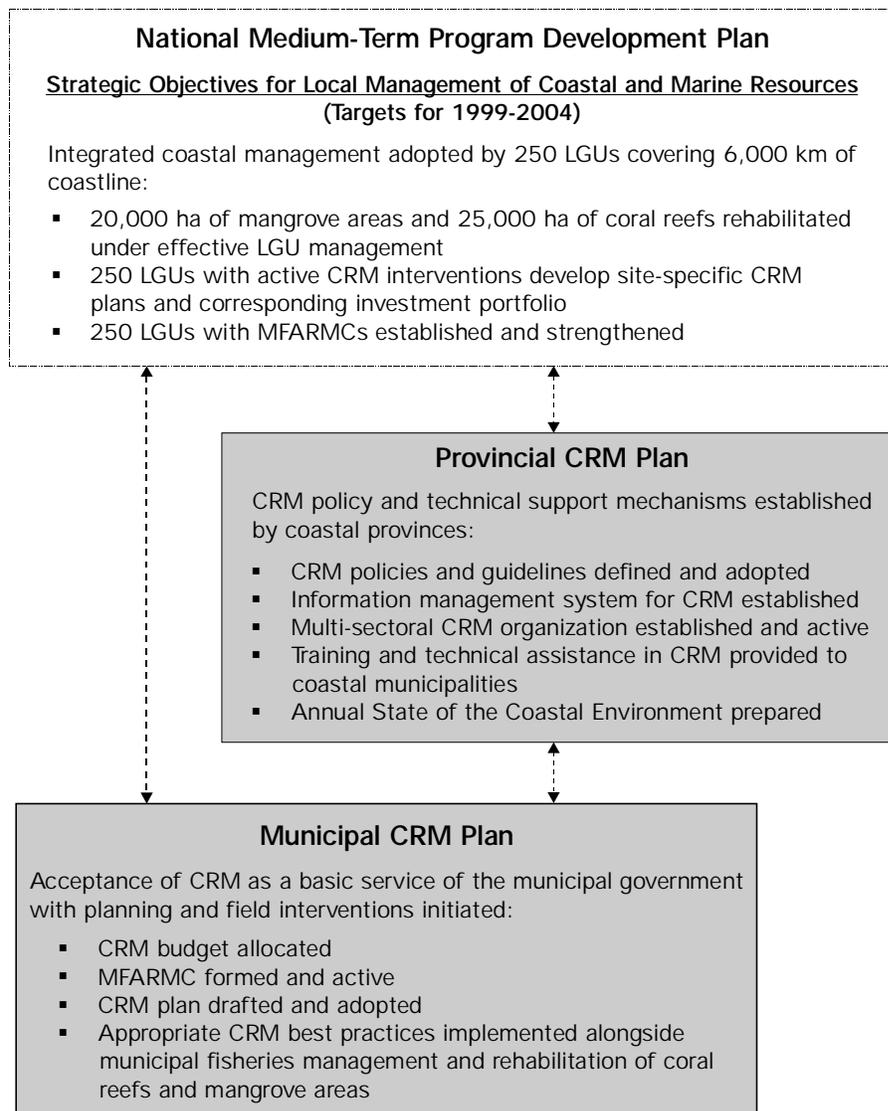

Figure 7.4. Framework of CRM Plan integration

Provincial Physical Framework Plan

The Provincial Physical Framework Plan (PPFP) is a document that translates the development policies, goals and objectives of the province into a land use plan. It indicates the manner in which land resources of the province shall be used during a 20-year period so that people can benefit from continuous land protection and utilization.

Currently being re-written, the PPFP incorporates a component on CRM based on national and regional objectives, as well as the commitments of the Provincial Government through the Bohol Environment Code of 1998.

SUMMARY

In order to facilitate good CRM, an information management system must be in place. The NRDB, which is based at the BEMO, should be considered as the "mother" of databases in the province, and all agencies are encouraged to use, validate and add information to the NRDB.