

სქა

გუგუნი  
შანი

# SEA GUARDIANS

Cebu City, Philippines  
2010

Across the Philippines, the nitty-gritty work to reverse decades of destruction and indiscriminate extraction of marine resources is fueled by local sea guardians who have made marine conservation their personal advocacy. Based on true stories from six fishing communities assisted by the Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest (FISH) Project, SEA GUARDIANS tells about the struggles and triumphs of these homegrown champions as they stand up for their chosen cause. The stories are told in both words and pictures and feature the main protagonists playing themselves, along with other community members portraying various roles. While true to the essence of each story, this book is not an exact retelling of events as they happened.

The FISH Project is a 7-year (2003-2010) technical assistance project of the United States Agency for International Development and the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources aimed at building capacity, improving policies, and developing an informed constituency for fisheries management in the Philippines.

To all those who shared their stories and all the others who participated in the photo shoots for this publication, our heartfelt thanks. We dedicate this to you and all the everyday heroes working for the recovery and sustainability of Philippine marine resources.

## **Eco-Warrior. 1**

Julficar Ladjahali, as himself  
Maimona Ladjahali, as herself  
Nur Harun, as himself  
Lagasan, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi residents,  
playing various roles

## **A Good Cause. 14**

Ruel Ramirez, as himself  
Aniceta 'Anning' Gulayan, as herself  
Talibon, Bohol residents, playing various  
roles

## **A Gift of Life. 21**

Rico Cruz, as himself  
Lilibeth Cruz (Rico's wife), as herself  
Bantigue Island, Carlos P. Garcia, Bohol  
residents, playing various roles

## **Stay the Course. 32**

Leonilo Vaz, as himself  
Buena Vista, Tandag, Surigao del Sur residents,  
playing various roles

## **Women take the Lead. 42**

Village chairman Arnulfa Duenas & other  
women of Uba, as themselves  
Menilo 'Butch' Ravina, as himself  
Men of Uba, Cortes, Surigao del Sur, playing  
various roles

## **Coming into her Own. 52**

Ma. Lourdes Alvarez & family, as themselves  
Village chairman Yuri Palanca, as himself  
Bintuan, Coron, Palawan residents, playing  
various roles

## **Marine Sanctuary: What it's About. 60**

*Citation:* FISH Project (Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest Project). 2010. Sea Guardians. Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest (FISH) Project of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. Cebu City, Philippines. 61 p.

*Story, photography & direction, photo effects & layout by* Asuncion E. Sia  
*Additional photos:* FISH Project files

This publication was made possible through support provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms and conditions of Contract No. AID-492-C-00-03-00022-00. This publication may be reproduced or quoted in other publications as long as proper reference is made to the source. The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

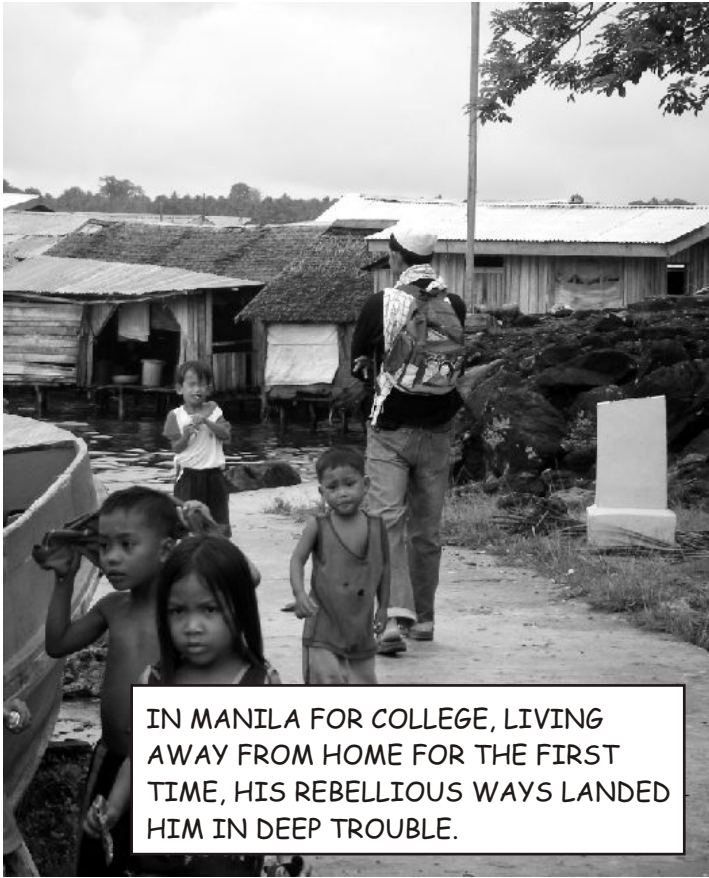
# ECO WARRIOR

**JULFICAR 'Piks' LADJAHALI.**  
VILLAGE CHAIRMAN, LAGASAN, BONGAO,  
TAWI-TAWI, PHILIPPINES

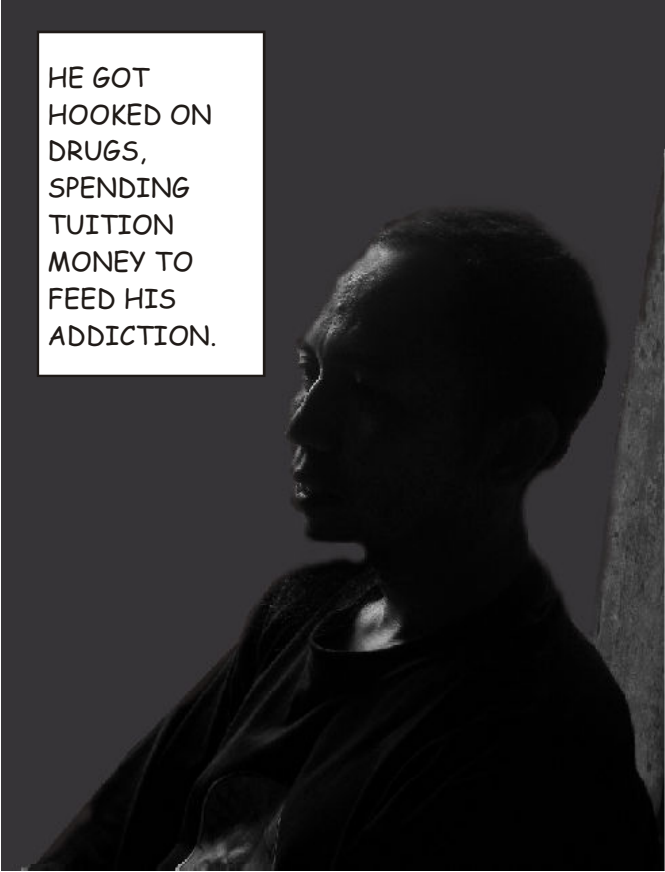
BORN TO A LANDED AND LOCALLY INFLUENTIAL FAMILY AND RAISED IN THE SAME VILLAGE THAT HE NOW LEADS, PIKS SHOWED AN INNATE, RATHER MISCHIEVOUS, LEADERSHIP EARLY IN LIFE.



TO HIS HIGH SCHOOL PEERS HE WAS THE 'GOVERNOR,' TENACIOUS ABOUT THE CAUSES HE CHOSE TO ADVOCATE. TO HIS TEACHERS, HE WAS A 'RENEGADE STUDENT,' THE ONE MOST LIKELY TO CHALLENGE AUTHORITY JUST TO PROVE A POINT.



IN MANILA FOR COLLEGE, LIVING AWAY FROM HOME FOR THE FIRST TIME, HIS REBELLIOUS WAYS LANDED HIM IN DEEP TROUBLE.



HE GOT HOOKED ON DRUGS, SPENDING TUITION MONEY TO FEED HIS ADDICTION.



SOON HIS PARENTS HEARD ABOUT HIS DRUG USE, AND ORDERED HIM TO COME HOME.



THOUGH UNREPENTANT, HE OBEYED...



... AND QUICKLY RECLAIMED HIS POSITION AS LEADER OF HIS PEER GROUP.



STILL ADDICTED HE FOUND A WAY TO COP MONEY FOR DRUGS.



YOU KNOW BOSS, WE CAN CATCH MORE FISH IF WE USE DYNAMITE. I'M JUST A BIT WORRIED THAT WE MIGHT GET CAUGHT.



OF COURSE YOU WON'T GET CAUGHT. I'VE GOT ALL BASES COVERED. JUST DO YOUR THING AND BRING ME MY SHARE.



SON, YOU CAN'T CARRY ON LIKE THIS. YOU KNOW DRUGS ARE MAKING YOU SICK.



I'M OK MOTHER. BUT FINE, I'LL DO AS YOU SAY. WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST I SHOULD DO?

LET'S GO TO ZAMBOANGA. THERE'S A DOCTOR THERE THAT CAN HELP YOU.



HE RETURNED HOME AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS A REHABILITATED MAN, DETERMINED TO MAKE UP FOR PAST MISTAKES.



A FEW YEARS LATER HE DECLARED HIS BID FOR THE TOP ELECTED POSITION IN HIS VILLAGE...



... AND WON.

MEANWHILE, IN THE NEARBY VILLAGE OF PABABAG...

WE AGREE WE SHOULD HAVE A MARINE SANCTUARY LIKE YOU SUGGESTED BUT WE MUST INCLUDE THE VILLAGE OF LAGASAN TOO. WE NEED PIKS ON OUR SIDE TO MAKE THIS WORK.

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA. WE WILL DO AS YOU SUGGEST. DON'T WORRY WE AT THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT WILL BE WORKING CLOSELY WITH YOU AND YOUR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT TO PUT TOGETHER A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PACKAGE THAT WILL WORK BEST FOR YOUR COMMUNITY.

I'M NUR HARUN, TAWI-TAWI MANAGER OF THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT. WE'RE HERE TO HELP THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT. HOW IS FISHING HEREABOUTS, CHAIRMAN?

NOT AS GOOD AS IT USED TO BE, I'M AFRAID.

YES I HEARD ABOUT YOUR PLANS IN PABABAG. TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS MARINE SANCTUARY.

YOU SHOULD HAVE A MARINE SANCTUARY, A PROTECTED PLACE FOR FISH TO BREED AND GROW. WE CAN HELP YOU SET IT UP.

OF COURSE, CHAIRMAN. IN FACT, IF YOU WISH, WE CAN SHOW YOU.

WITH THE FISH PROJECT'S HELP, PIKS AND OTHERS VISITED SEVERAL SUCCESSFUL MARINE SANCTUARIES IN CEBU, BOHOL AND NEGROS ORIENTAL...

A MARINE SANCTUARY IS A PROTECTED AREA WHERE FISHES ARE ALLOWED TO BREED AND GROW UNDISTURBED BY HUMAN ACTIVITIES SUCH AS FISHING.

A LARGE NUMBER OF MARINE SANCTUARIES IN THE PHILIPPINES ARE MANAGED BY FISHING COMMUNITIES WHO BENEFIT FROM THEIR SPILLOVER EFFECT, WHEN FISHES START MOVING OUT FROM THE SANCTUARIES TO ADJACENT AREAS, WHERE FISHERS CAN CATCH THEM.

IN MANY AREAS, FISHERS HAVE REPORTED HIGHER FISH YIELDS A YEAR OR TWO AFTER THEY STARTED PROTECTING THEIR SANCTUARIES.



UPON RETURNING HOME...



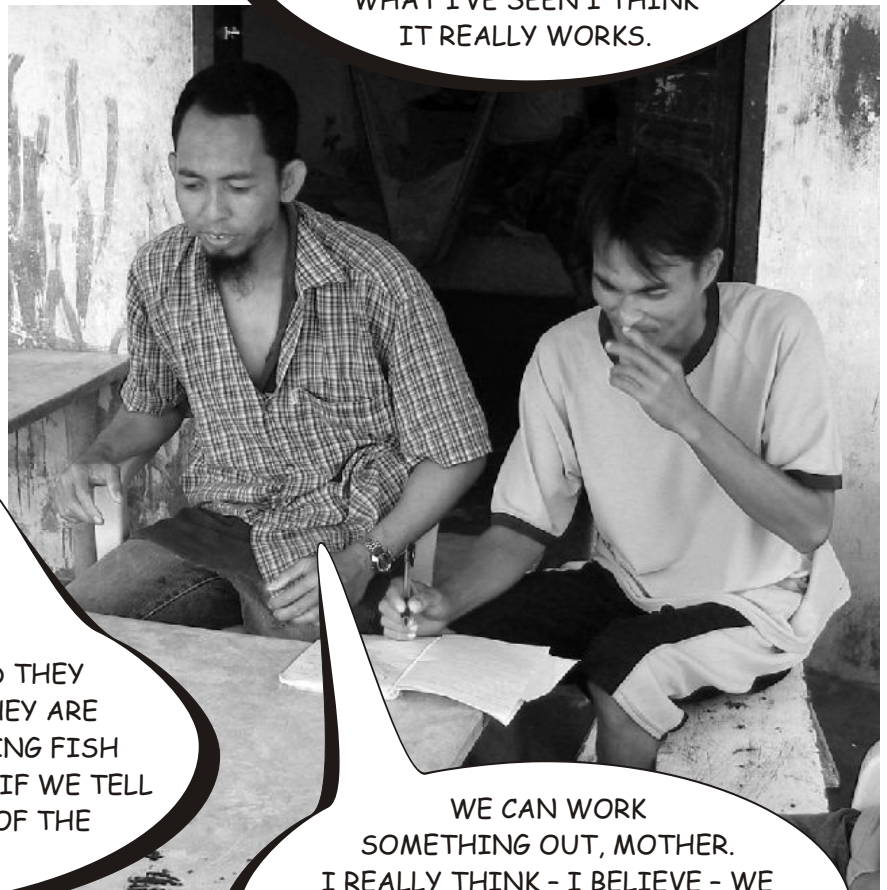
ANYTHING WE CAN DO HERE?

VERY INTERESTING TRIP. WE LEARNED ABOUT THE VARIOUS WAYS OTHER COMMUNITIES MANAGE THEIR COASTAL RESOURCES.

DEFINITELY. FIRST, OF COURSE, WE MUST ENFORCE FISHERY LAWS. AND THEN I REALLY THINK WE SHOULD HAVE OUR OWN MARINE SANCTUARY. I TOLD YOU ABOUT IT BEFORE AND FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN I THINK IT REALLY WORKS.



WHAT ABOUT THE PEOPLE, PIKS? WHAT WOULD THEY DO FOR FOOD? EVEN NOW THEY ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT DECLINING FISH CATCHES. WHAT WILL THEY SAY IF WE TELL THEM WE'RE CLOSING PART OF THE SEA TO FISHING?



WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT, MOTHER. I REALLY THINK - I BELIEVE - WE HAVE TO DO THIS. THERE IS NO CHOICE. PEOPLE WILL BE WORSE OFF IF WE DON'T DO ANYTHING.

WE HAVE A BUSY YEAR AHEAD. THE PEOPLE WHO ARE HELPING US HAVE PREPARED A FULL CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES FOR US.



FIRST, WE HAVE TO RALLY THE TOWN COUNCIL TO PASS AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE MARINE SANCTUARY.

INSTALL BUOYS TO MARK THE SANCTUARY'S BOUNDARIES

BUILD OUR GUARDHOUSE.



AND WE WILL BE DEPUTIZED AND TRAINED IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND OTHER ASPECTS OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT



WE ARE ALL NEW IN THIS. I'M SURE THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF CHALLENGES. BUT WE WILL LEARN AS WE GO ALONG.





DID YOU ALL GET YOUR DEPUTATION PAPERS CHAIRMAN?

YES SIR NUR, THANK YOU. WE CAN NOW DO OUR PATROL DUTY.

IT WAS KIND OF YOU TO LEND US YOUR BOAT UNCLE. WE WILL HAVE TO USE IT AGAIN UNTIL WE GET OUR PATROL BOAT.



NO PROBLEM CHAIRMAN. IT'S FOR A GOOD CAUSE. NOW AT LEAST PEOPLE KNOW WE WILL NOT ALLOW ILLEGAL FISHING IN OUR WATERS.

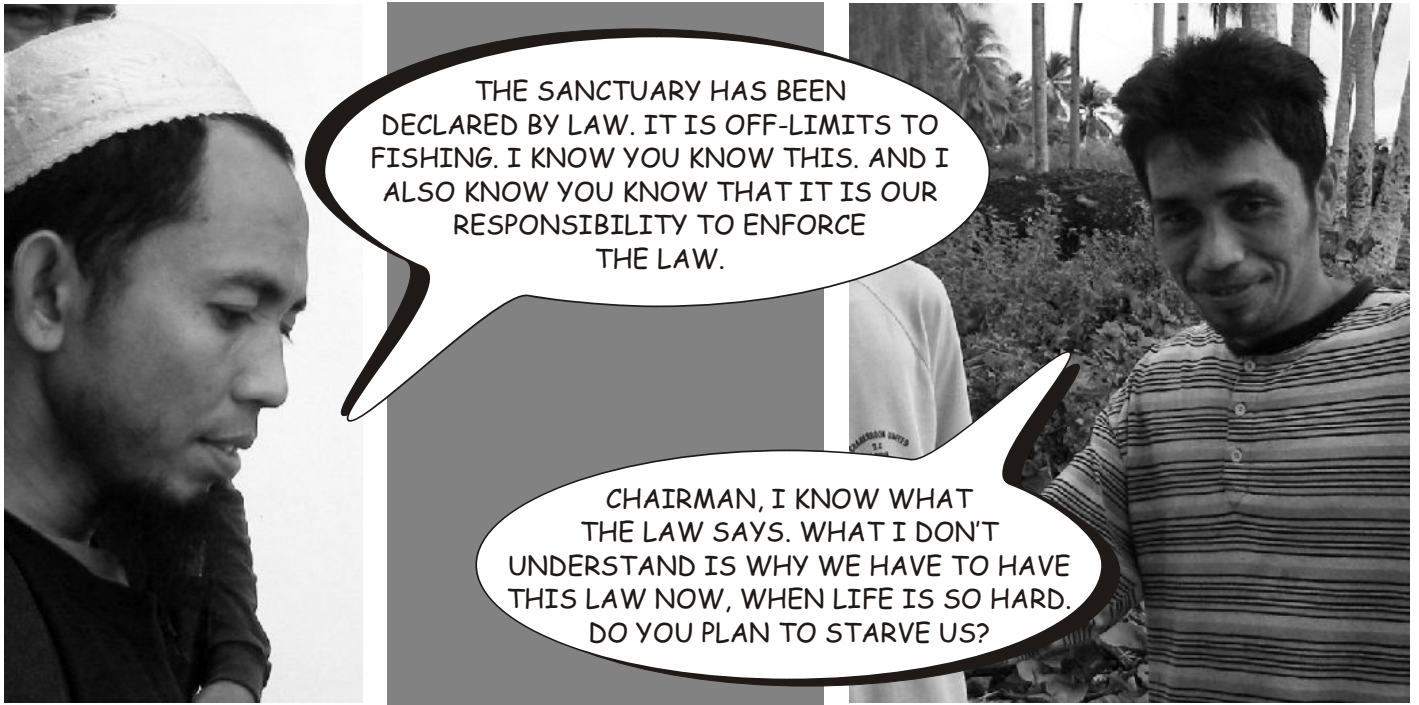


WHAT'S ALL THIS COMMOTION ABOUT GENTLEMEN?

CHAIRMAN, WE CAUGHT HIM ENTERING THE SANCTUARY.



SO YOU DID. BIG DEAL. I'VE BEEN FISHING THERE FOREVER. WHO GAVE YOU THE RIGHT TO SAY I CANNOT?



THE SANCTUARY HAS BEEN DECLARED BY LAW. IT IS OFF-LIMITS TO FISHING. I KNOW YOU KNOW THIS. AND I ALSO KNOW YOU KNOW THAT IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENFORCE THE LAW.

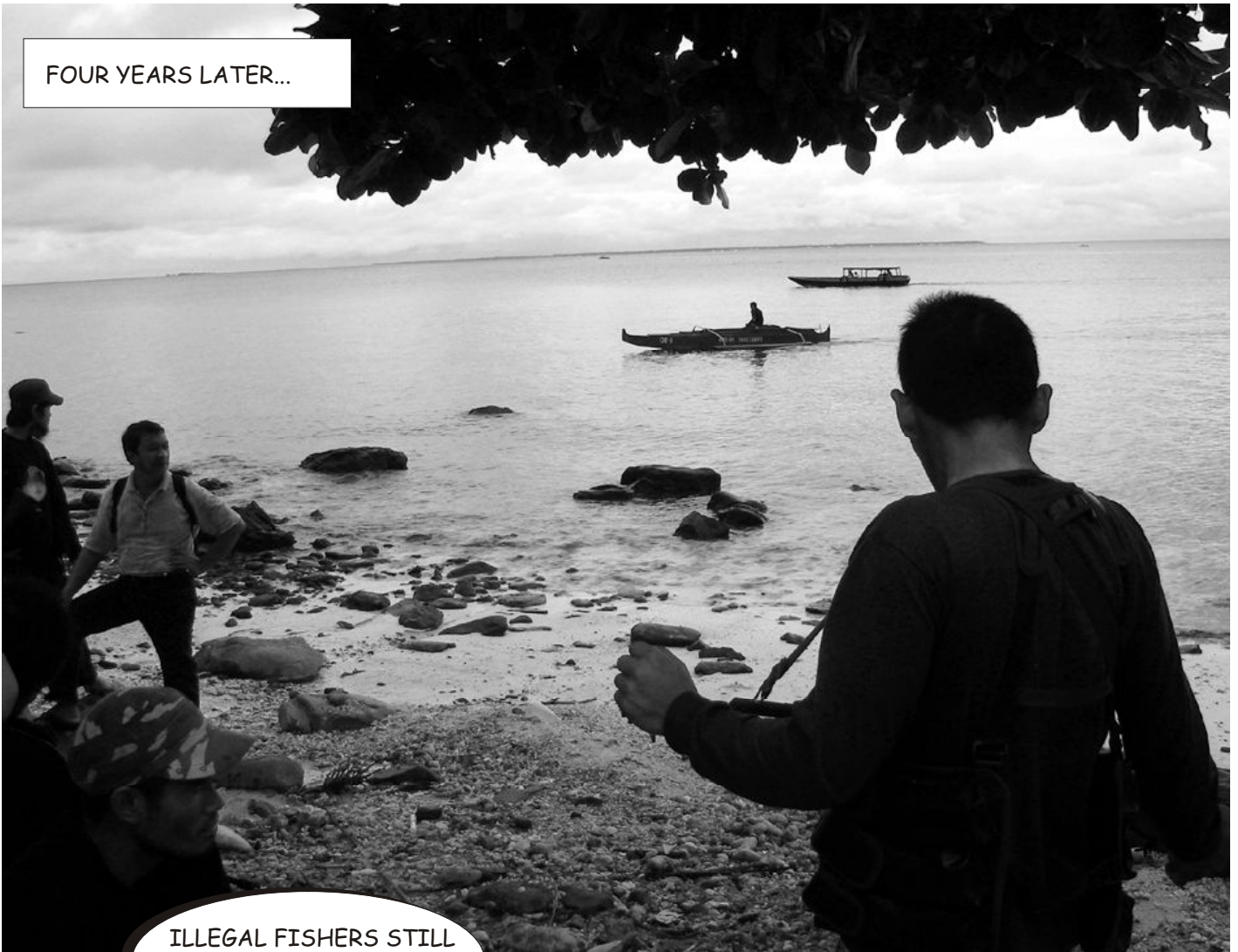
CHAIRMAN, I KNOW WHAT THE LAW SAYS. WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND IS WHY WE HAVE TO HAVE THIS LAW NOW, WHEN LIFE IS SO HARD. DO YOU PLAN TO STARVE US?



LET'S NOT ARGUE ABOUT THIS NOW. IT WON'T MATTER WHAT I SAY AT THIS TIME WHEN YOU REFUSE TO ACCEPT THAT WE EVEN NEED TO DO WHAT WE'RE DOING. IN TIME I KNOW YOU WILL UNDERSTAND. YOU'LL BE WELCOME HERE WHEN YOU DECIDE TO RESPECT OUR LAW. UNTIL THEN PLEASE STAY CLEAR OF OUR WATER.

ALL RIGHT, BROTHERS. PEACE.

FOUR YEARS LATER...



ILLEGAL FISHERS STILL CAUSING YOU TROUBLE CHAIRMAN?



HAHA. YES, AND I GUESS THEY ALWAYS WILL. AT LEAST THERE ARE NOT AS MANY OF THEM AS BEFORE. OUR ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN SEEMS TO BE EFFECTIVE....

BUT SERIOUSLY, OUR HARD WORK IS PAYING OFF. THERE IS SO MUCH IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS THAT WE ARE THANKFUL FOR!



OUR COMMUNITY IS BEGINNING TO REAP THE REWARDS OF PROTECTING THE SEA. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO THIS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO IT WELL.

AS FOR MYSELF, I KNOW I FOUND A CAUSE THAT'S TRULY WORTH FIGHTING FOR. I BET MY HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS WOULD BE PROUD.



**THE END**



# THE GOOD CAUSE

**RUEL RAMIREZ.**  
 FORMER COASTAL LAW  
 ENFORCEMENT TEAM LEADER,  
 TALIBON, BOHOL



RUEL WAS A CHILD SOLDIER.



AT 14, HE BECAME AN ARMED COMBATANT, FIGHTING FOR THE CAUSE OF COMMUNISM ALONGSIDE HIS FATHER, AN OFFICIAL OF THE NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY IN BOHOL.

AT 19, HE WAS CAPTURED BY GOVERNMENT FORCES, DOING JAIL TIME UNTIL HE WAS GRANTED AMNESTY FOUR YEARS LATER. A FREE MAN, HE BEGAN THE DIFFICULT PROCESS OF REINTEGRATION INTO THE MAINSTREAM SOCIETY, WORKING ODD JOBS TO EARN HIS KEEP.



ALL RIGHT GUYS.  
TONIGHT WE START OUR PATROL  
DUTY. DO YOU HAVE ANY  
QUESTIONS ?

IN 2004, BY THEN 34 AND WORKING AS A SECURITY AIDE OF THE NEW MAYOR OF TALIBON TOWN IN BOHOL, HE WAS CALLED TO FIGHT FOR A DIFFERENT CAUSE.

I AM VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ILLEGAL FISHING THAT'S HAPPENING HERE. I WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, BUT I AM NOT QUITE SURE YET THAT THE BUREAUCRACY WILL FULLY COOPERATE.

I AM CREATING A SPECIAL TASK FORCE TO DO SEA PATROL DUTIES. WILL YOU HEAD IT? FIND PEOPLE YOU TRUST THAT CAN BE PART OF YOUR TEAM. THIS IS TOO IMPORTANT TO FAIL.

YES, MAYOR,  
OF COURSE.

ER, YES SIR. I'M HONORED THAT YOU INVITED ME HERE. BUT I'M A STREETSWEEPER, NOT AN ENFORCER. ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT ME IN YOUR TEAM?

OF COURSE. YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU. THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS FOR NOW. THE MAYOR GAVE US A JOB TO DO AND WE WILL DO IT AS WELL AS WE KNOW HOW. JUST FOLLOW MY LEAD. WE WILL ALL LEARN AS WE GO ALONG.

A FEW MONTHS LATER...



I'M ANNING GULAYAN FROM THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT. I'M TOLD YOU'RE THE LEADER OF THE SEA PATROL TEAM HERE, RUEL.

WOULD YOU AND YOUR MEN LIKE TO JOIN OUR COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM?



SURE. IF THE MAYOR WILL ALLOW US WE WILL BE THERE. WE CERTAINLY NEED TRAINING. THESE PAST MONTHS HAVE BEEN A REAL STRUGGLE FOR ME AND MY MEN. MANY TIMES WE HAVE NO CLUE IF WE ARE DOING THE JOB RIGHT.



I'M SURE YOU WILL FIND THE MAYOR QUITE AGREEABLE. HE'S A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE PROGRAM.

AND YOU WILL FIND OUR COASTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING PRETTY USEFUL.

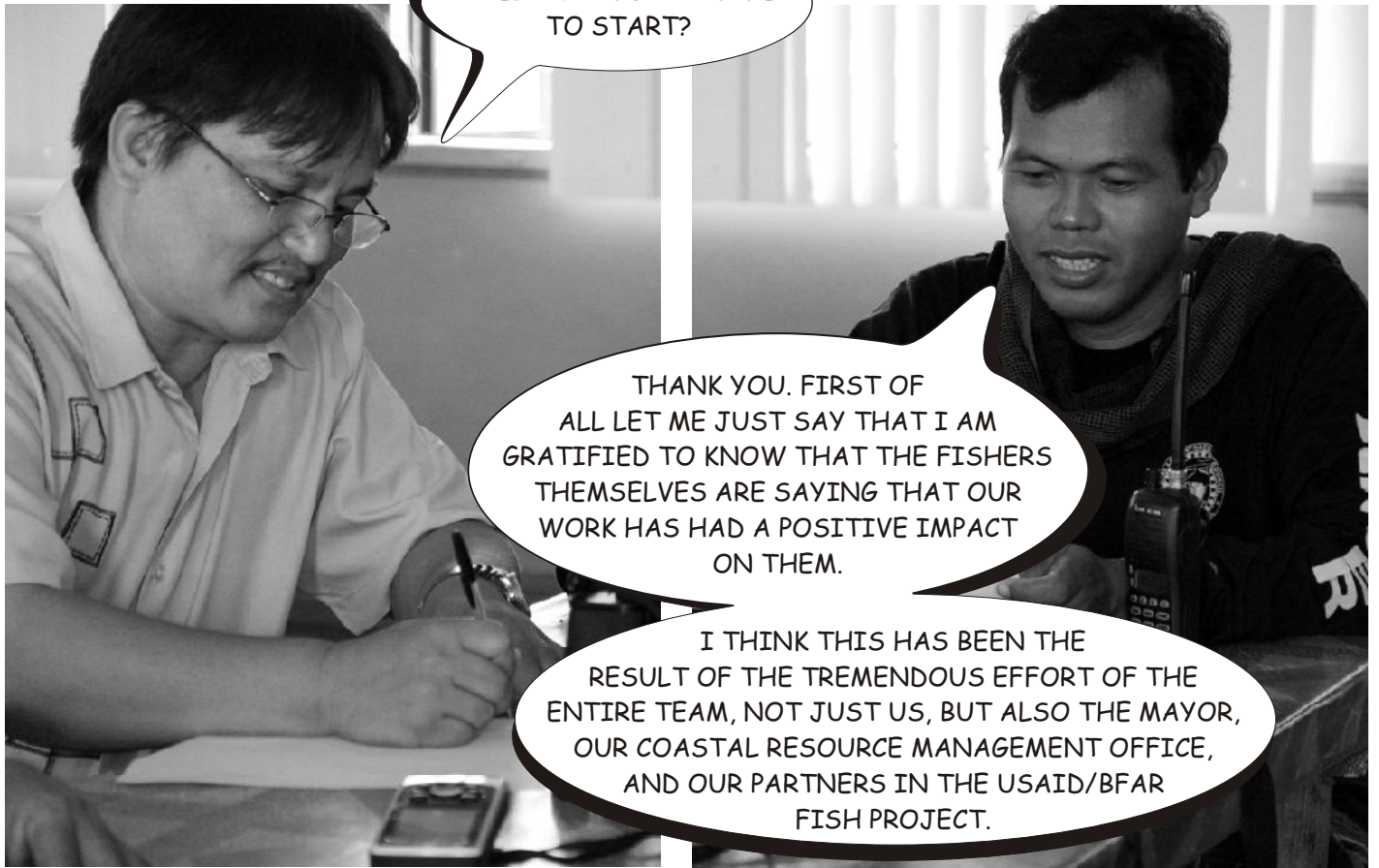


AFTER THREE YEARS...



CONGRATULATIONS, GUYS. BASED ON REPORTS THAT I HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE FIELD, WE'VE SUCCEEDED IN REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF ILLEGAL FISHING IN OUR MUNICIPAL WATERS. I'D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR PERSONAL INSIGHTS ON THIS.

RUEL? WOULD YOU LIKE TO START?



THANK YOU. FIRST OF ALL LET ME JUST SAY THAT I AM GRATIFIED TO KNOW THAT THE FISHERS THEMSELVES ARE SAYING THAT OUR WORK HAS HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEM.

I THINK THIS HAS BEEN THE RESULT OF THE TREMENDOUS EFFORT OF THE ENTIRE TEAM, NOT JUST US, BUT ALSO THE MAYOR, OUR COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OFFICE, AND OUR PARTNERS IN THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT.

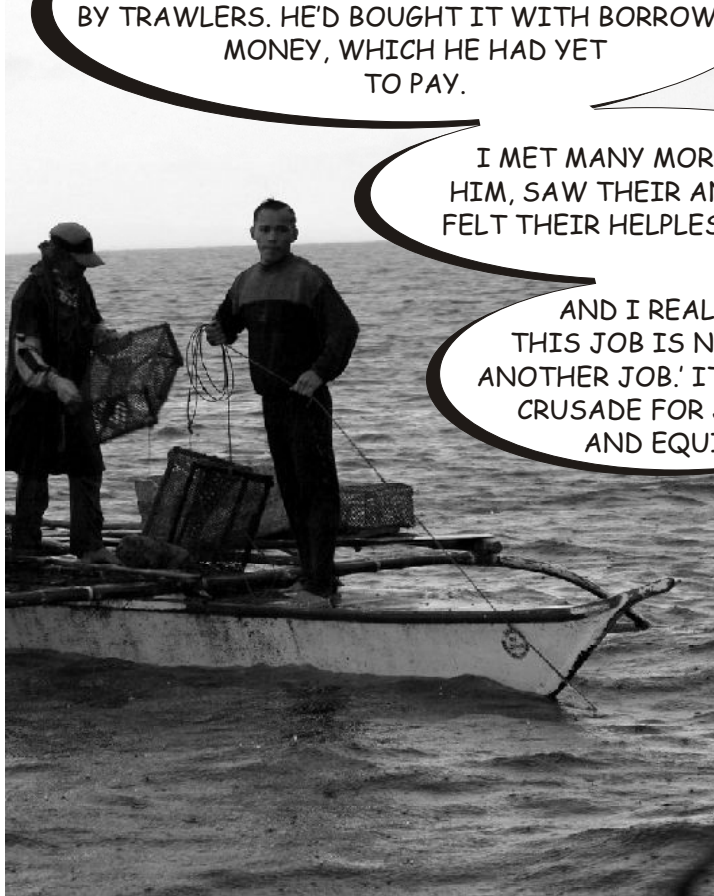


I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, GUYS,  
BUT IN THE BEGINNING, WHEN THE MAYOR  
GAVE ME THIS TASK, I LOOKED AT IT AS JUST  
ANOTHER JOB. I WAS GIVEN AN ORDER, AND  
LIKE A GOOD SOLDIER, I HAD TO  
OBEY IT.

THEN I MET A FISHER, TEARY-EYED  
BECAUSE HIS FISH TRAP HAD BEEN TRAMPLED  
BY TRAWLERS. HE'D BOUGHT IT WITH BORROWED  
MONEY, WHICH HE HAD YET  
TO PAY.

I MET MANY MORE LIKE  
HIM, SAW THEIR ANGUISH,  
FELT THEIR HELPLESSNESS...

AND I REALIZED:  
THIS JOB IS NOT 'JUST  
ANOTHER JOB.' IT IS ALSO A  
CRUSADE FOR JUSTICE  
AND EQUITY.



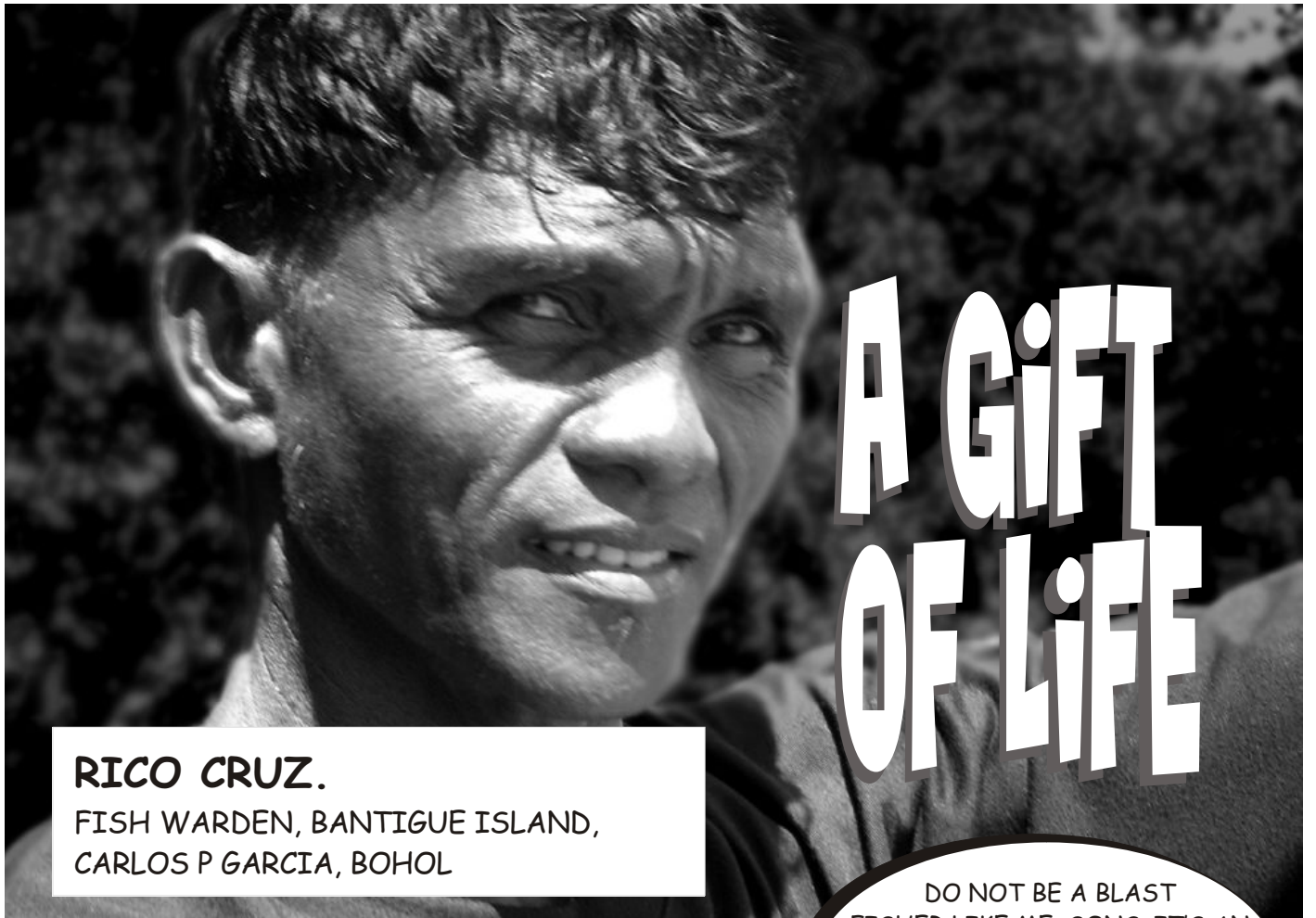


I THINK FISHERS DO - OR AT LEAST WILL EVENTUALLY - UNDERSTAND THAT WE'RE HERE TO HELP THEM TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE SEA, THEIR LIFEblood, SO THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO CATCH FISH NOT ONLY NOW BUT WELL INTO THE FUTURE. THE KEY IS TO KEEP EDUCATING THEM, AND ABOVE ALL DO OUR JOB WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR.



I SPENT YEARS IN THE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT BEING TAUGHT TO BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE FOR A WORTHY CAUSE, FOR THE COMMON GOOD. NOW MORE THAN AT ANY TIME IN MY LIFE, I FEEL THAT I HAVE CONTRIBUTED WELL TO A TRULY GOOD CAUSE.

THE END



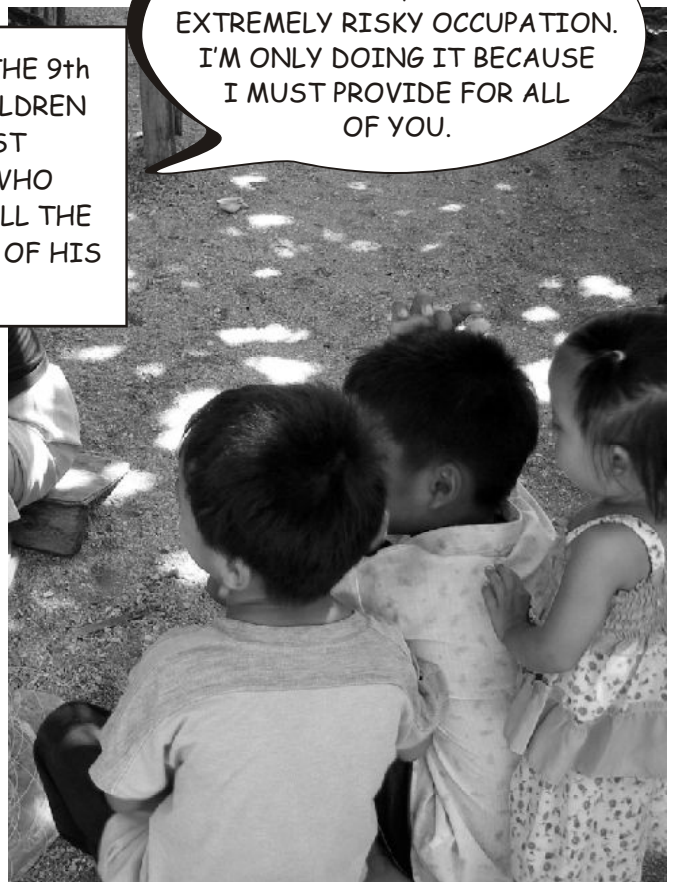
# A GIFT OF LIFE

**RICO CRUZ.**  
FISH WARDEN, BANTIGUE ISLAND,  
CARLOS P GARCIA, BOHOL

DO NOT BE A BLAST FISHER LIKE ME, SONS. IT'S AN EXTREMELY RISKY OCCUPATION. I'M ONLY DOING IT BECAUSE I MUST PROVIDE FOR ALL OF YOU.



RICO IS THE 9th OF 18 CHILDREN OF A BLAST FISHER, WHO KNEW WELL THE DANGERS OF HIS JOB .



HE ABIDED BY HIS FATHER'S ADVICE,  
UNTIL...

I'LL GIVE YOU 5,000  
PESOS FOR YOUR CATCH,  
AND I'LL EVEN PROVIDE  
THE EXPLOSIVES.

I'M IN. HOW ABOUT  
YOU RICO?

I DON'T KNOW. I'VE  
NEVER USED DYNAMITE. I  
DON'T THINK I CAN DO IT.

OF COURSE  
YOU CAN. DON'T WORRY.  
I'LL TEACH YOU.

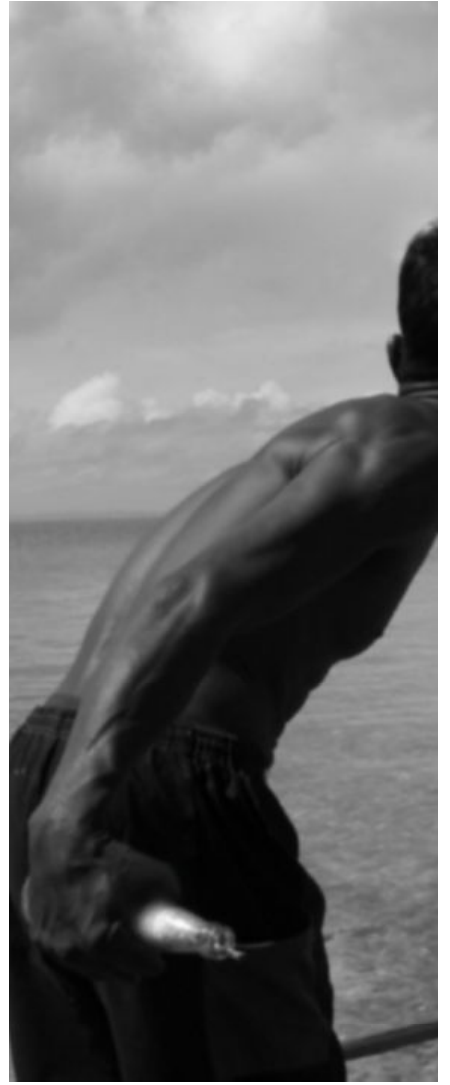
**BOOM!**

FIVE MONTHS LATER, ON A FATEFUL CHRISTMAS EVE...

HEY RICO. THERE'S A NICE SCHOOL OF FISH OVER THERE.

REALLY? WOW! PERFECT TIMING FOR CHRISTMAS. WHAT A GREAT PRESENT. I'LL HEAD OUT IMMEDIATELY.

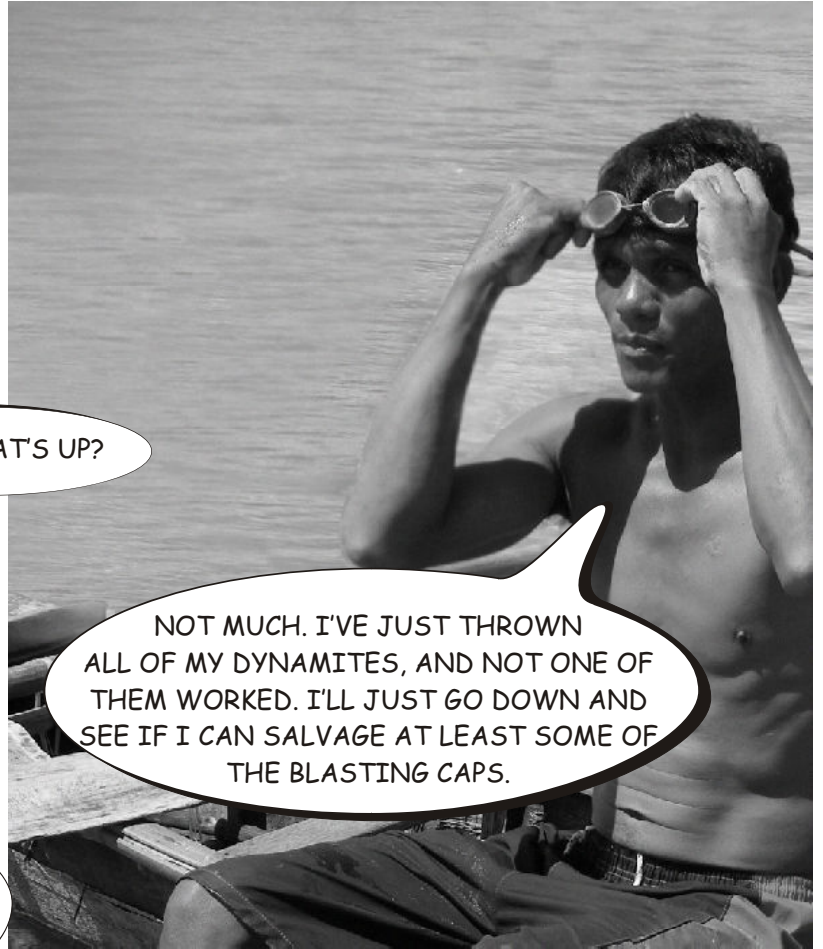






HEY, WHAT'S UP?

BE CAREFUL, MAN.  
THIS DOES NOT SEEM  
TO BE YOUR LUCKY  
DAY.

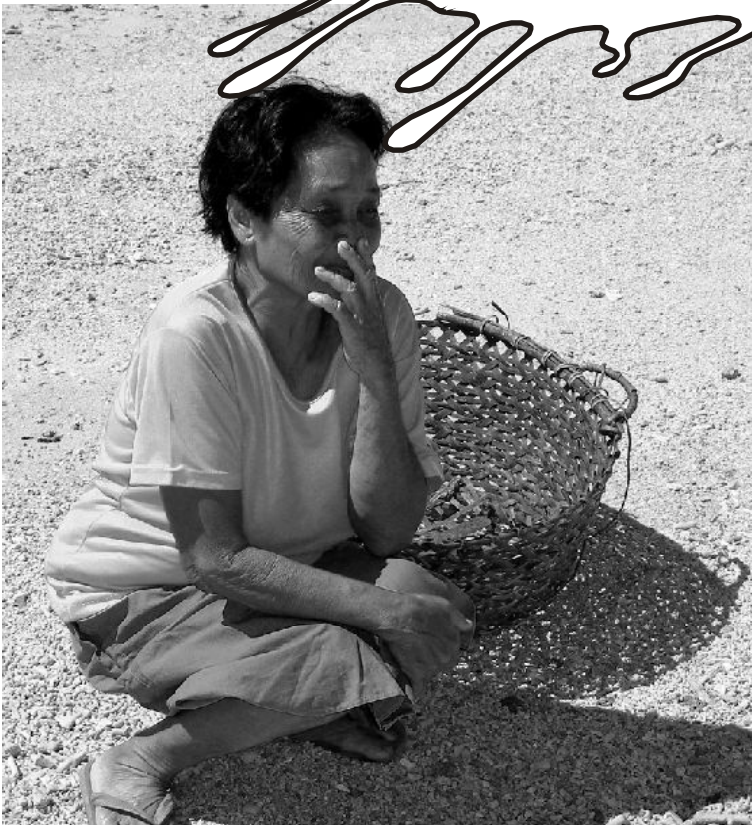


NOT MUCH. I'VE JUST THROWN  
ALL OF MY DYNAMITES, AND NOT ONE OF  
THEM WORKED. I'LL JUST GO DOWN AND  
SEE IF I CAN SALVAGE AT LEAST SOME OF  
THE BLASTING CAPS.



**BOOM!**

OH MY GOD!  
SOMEBODY!!! PLEASE HELPPPPP!  
MY SON-IN-LAW IS HURT!  
PLEASSEE! MY GOD...



NEW YEAR'S DAY...

WHAT WAS I THINKING? I KNEW THE RISKS. FATHER WARNED ME OFTEN ENOUGH ABOUT THEM.

I CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT THAT YOU AND OUR CHILDREN MIGHT HAVE HAD TO FEND FOR YOURSELVES, ALL BECAUSE OF MY FOOLISHNESS.

NOW, NOW!  
STOP BEATING YOURSELF UP. WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES. YOU'RE ALIVE, THAT'S ALL THAT REALLY MATTERS.

I KNOW. IT'S THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT THERE IS. A NEW YEAR, A NEW LIFE, NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO LIVE IT BETTER. ONE DAY I'LL BE ABLE TO GIVE BACK AND SAY I TRULY DESERVE THIS GIFT OF LIFE.

AND HE HAS DONE SO. TODAY. RICO IS A DEPUTY FISH WARDEN AND THE CHAIRMAN OF A PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION TASKED TO MANAGE A MARINE SANCTUARY AT HIS VILLAGE. AS WELL AS GUARDING THE SANCTUARY, HIS JOB IS TO GO AFTER ILLEGAL FISHERS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO USE DYNAMITE, AND EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING THE SEA AND EMPLOYING SUSTAINABLE FISHING METHODS.



WITH TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE FROM THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT AND THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT, HE AND HIS GROUP WORKED TOGETHER TO INSTALL BUOYS TO MARK THE SANCTUARY'S BOUNDARIES...



AND BUILD A GUARDHOUSE THAT ALLOWS THEM TO WATCH THE SANCTUARY 24/7.



HEY ! HEY YOU !!!  
YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE IN  
THERE ! THAT'S A NO-FISHING AREA !  
STAY OUT ! YES ! OUTSIDE  
THOSE BUOYS !



FATHER !  
ARE YOU COMING  
HOME YET?



YES SON. SOMEBODY WILL SOON BE HERE TO TAKE OVER. I SHOULD BE HOME WITHIN THE HOUR.



FAIRLY QUIET SO FAR, EXCEPT FOR A COUPLE OF POACHERS WHO TRIED TO ENTER BUT LEFT WITHOUT INCIDENT.




MAYBE IT WILL STAY THAT WAY. IT DOES SEEM LIKE PEOPLE ARE LESS LIKELY TO ATTEMPT TO VIOLATE OUR RULES NOW THAT'S THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE HERE TO GUARD THE SANCTUARY.

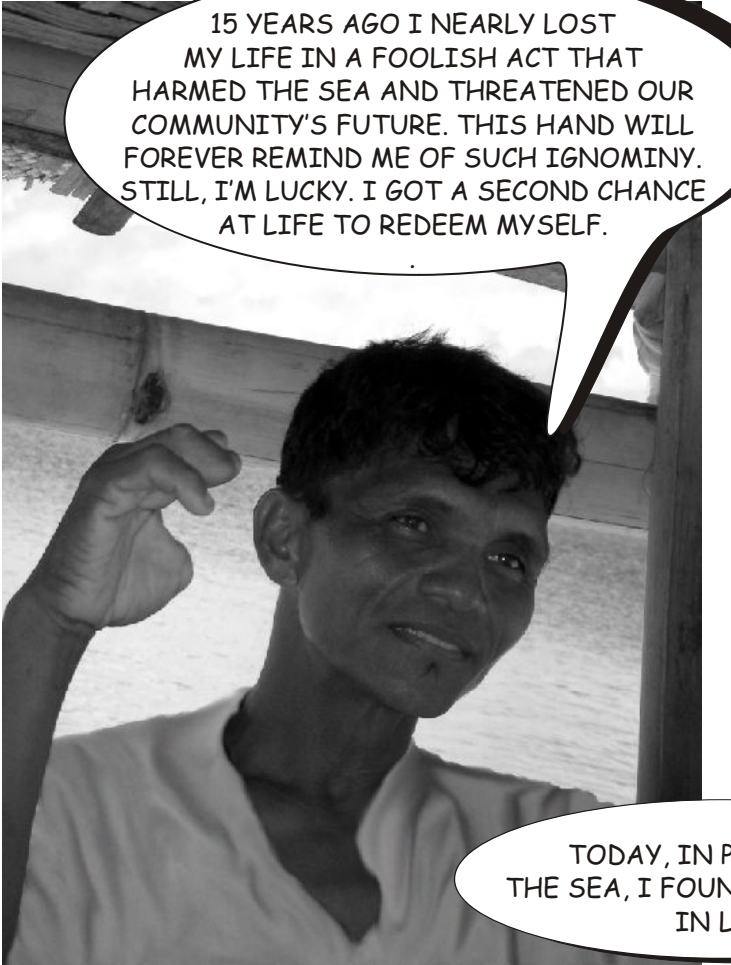
ANYWAY I'LL MAKE SURE NOBODY TRESPASSES DURING MY WATCH.




HEY THERE... A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS?



OH, HAHA. I WAS JUST REFLECTING ON HOW THINGS HAVE TURNED OUT FOR ME, AND I REALIZED I'M NOT DOING BAD AT ALL, AM I?

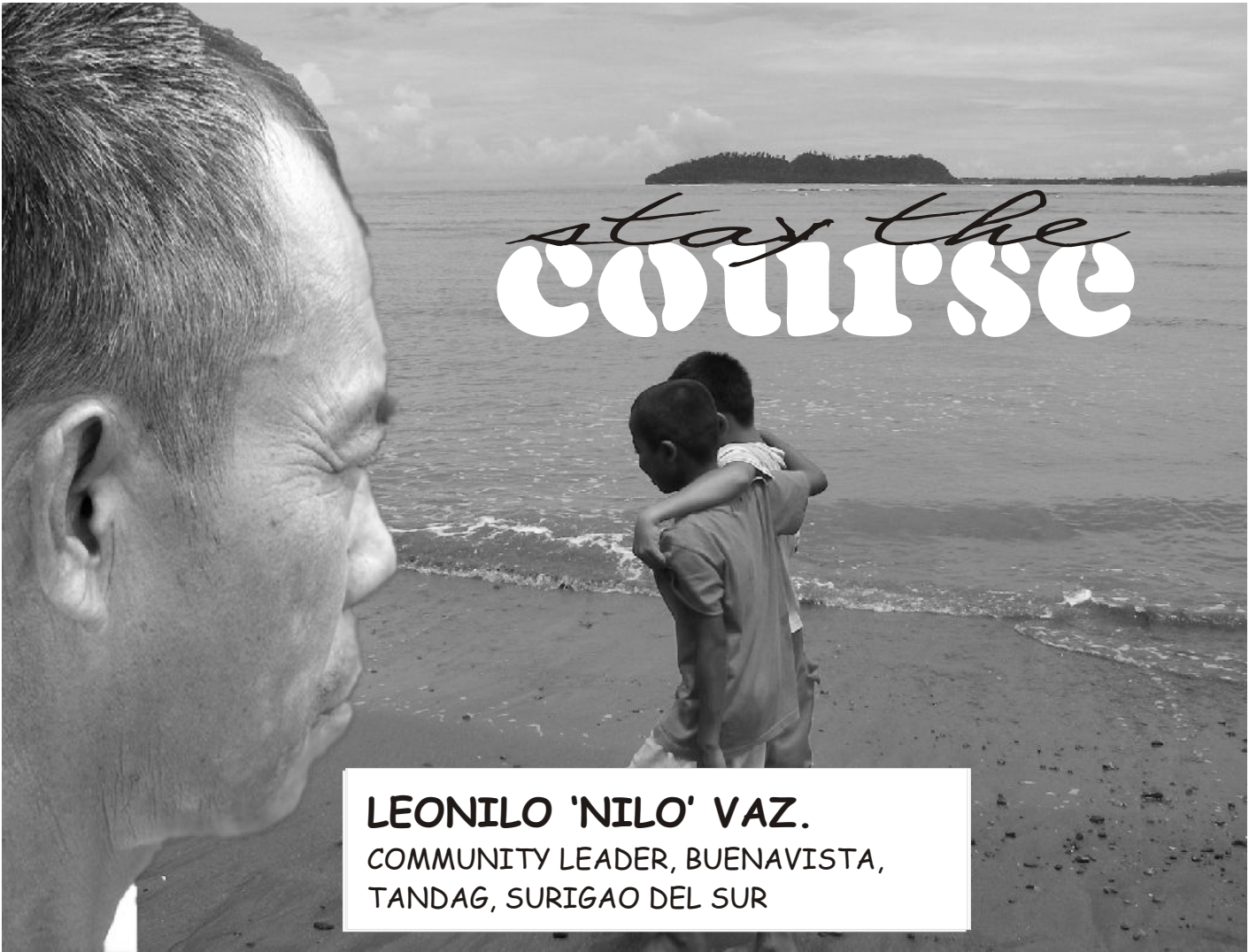


15 YEARS AGO I NEARLY LOST MY LIFE IN A FOOLISH ACT THAT HARMED THE SEA AND THREATENED OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE. THIS HAND WILL FOREVER REMIND ME OF SUCH IGNOMINY. STILL, I'M LUCKY. I GOT A SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE TO REDEEM MYSELF.



TODAY, IN PROTECTING THE SEA, I FOUND NEW PURPOSE IN LIFE.

**THE END**



# stay the course

**LEONILO 'NILO' VAZ.**  
COMMUNITY LEADER, BUENAVISTA,  
TANDAG, SURIGAO DEL SUR



AS THE CHAIRMAN OF A VILLAGE-LEVEL FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (FARMC), NILO FACED OPEN DEFIANCE FROM HIS OWN NEIGHBORS WHILE PUSHING FOR A MARINE SANCTUARY FOR HIS COMMUNITY.

ONLY A PORTION OF OUR FISHING GROUND WILL BE CLOSED TO ALLOW OUR FISH STOCKS TO BREED AND GROW UNDISTURBED. BELIEVE ME GUYS, IN THE END YOU WILL BE THE ONES TO BENEFIT.

YEAH RIGHT. AND IN THE MEANTIME MY FAMILY GOES HUNGRY. THANKS, BUT NO THANKS.



I HEARD WHAT YOU'RE UP TO. JUST STAY OUT OF MY WAY OR THERE'LL BE TROUBLE.



UNDETERRED, HE SOUGHT THE TOWN COUNCIL'S SUPPORT.

GOOD MORNING COUNCILOR. DO YOU HAVE TIME TO DISCUSS THE MARINE SANCTUARY I TOLD YOU ABOUT BEFORE?



AH YES. SOME PEOPLE FROM THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT HAVE JUST BEEN HERE TO EXPLAIN IT. WHAT HAVE YOU GOT HERE?

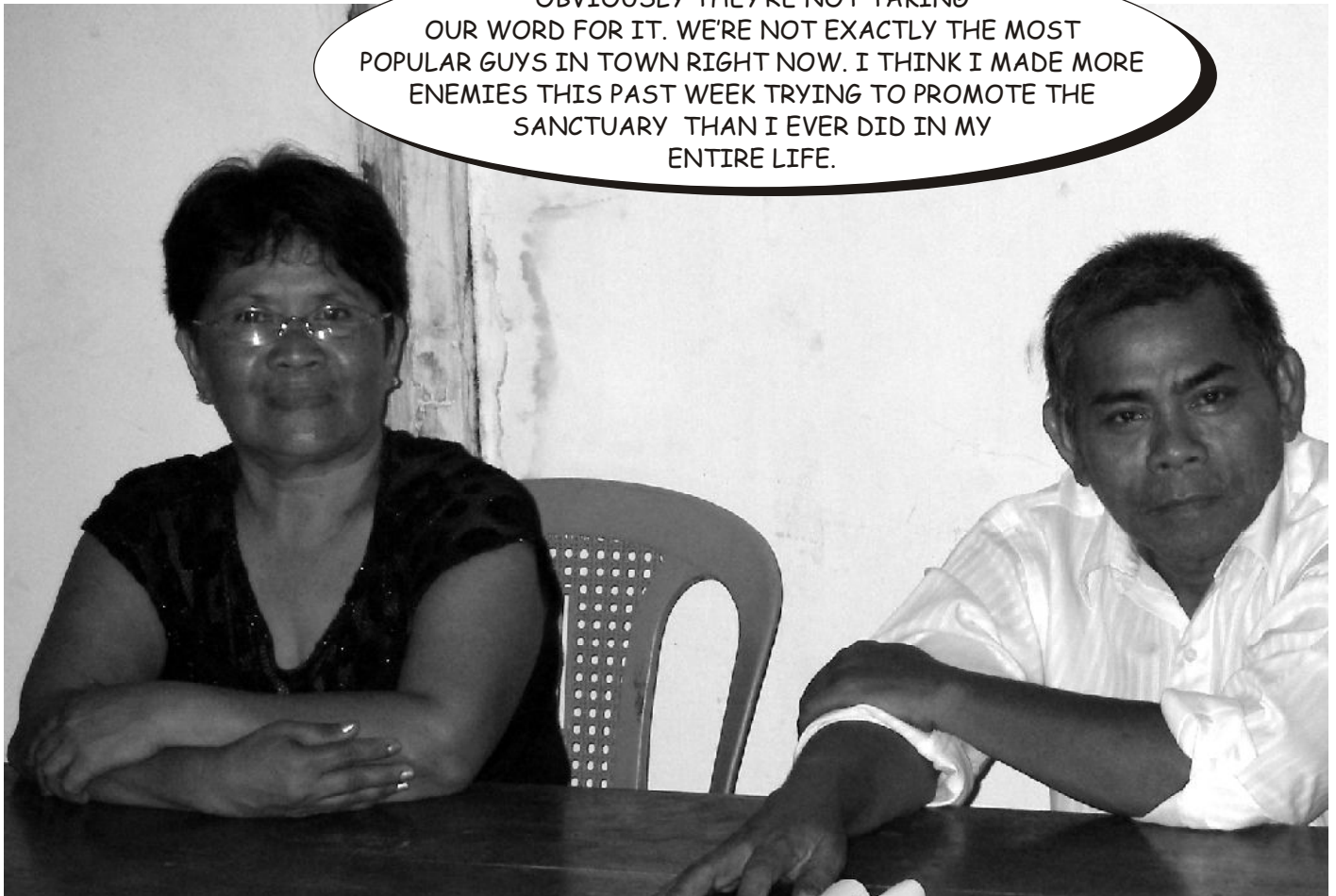
SOME DETAILS OF OUR OPERATIONAL NEEDS THAT WE HOPE YOU CAN SUPPORT THROUGH AN ORDINANCE.

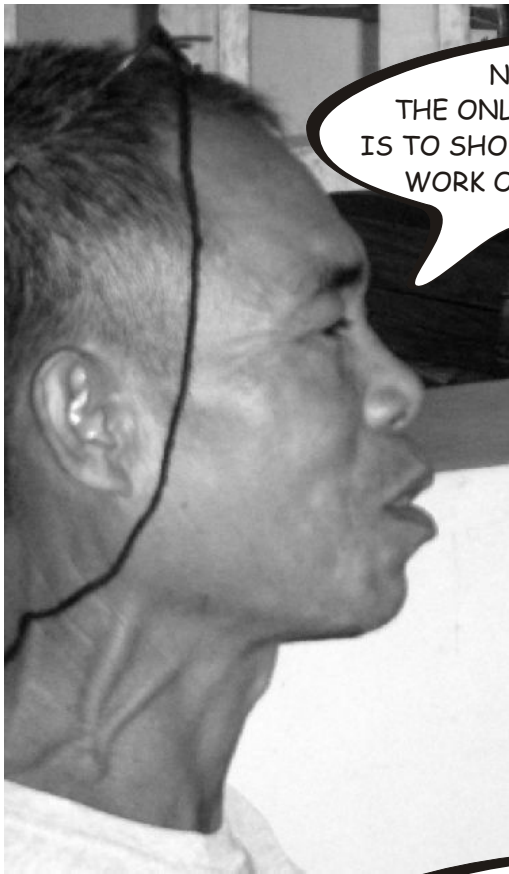
AND HE RALLIED THE FARMERS BEHIND THE PLAN.

BUT I HEARD MANY FISHERS AREN'T HAPPY. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

OH YES. TSK. I'M AFRAID WE'LL HAVE OUR WORK CUT OUT CONVINCING PEOPLE ABOUT THE SANCTUARY.

OBVIOUSLY THEY'RE NOT TAKING OUR WORD FOR IT. WE'RE NOT EXACTLY THE MOST POPULAR GUYS IN TOWN RIGHT NOW. I THINK I MADE MORE ENEMIES THIS PAST WEEK TRYING TO PROMOTE THE SANCTUARY THAN I EVER DID IN MY ENTIRE LIFE.





NOTHING ELSE TO IT.  
THE ONLY WAY TO CONVINCE THEM  
IS TO SHOW THEM THAT THIS WILL ALL  
WORK OUT FOR THEM IN THE END.

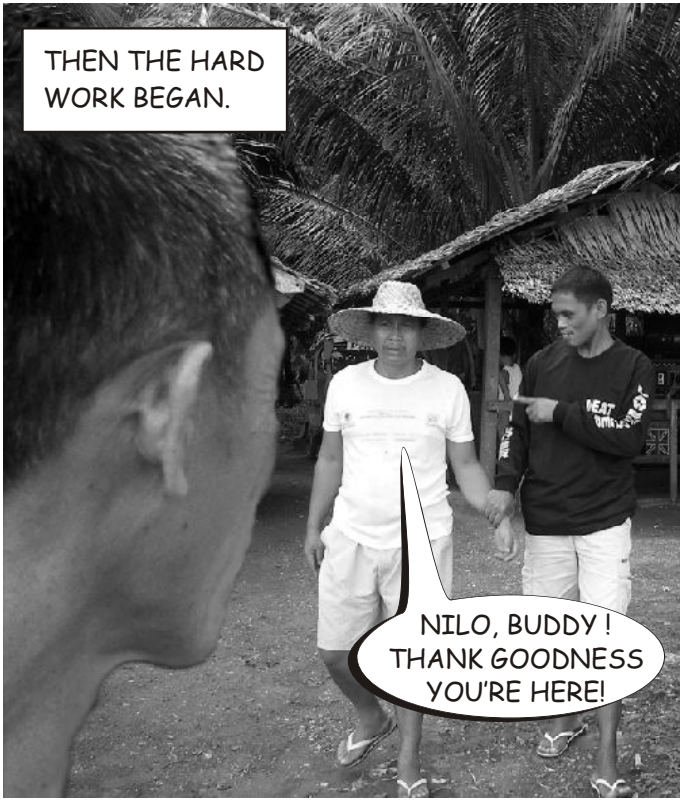


I'M WITH YOU ON THAT NILO.  
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO DO THIS WITHOUT  
THEM FOR NOW. LET'S HOPE THAT WHEN  
WE GET SOME GOOD RESULTS THEY'LL  
START COMING AROUND.



IS THAT WHERE THE MARINE  
SANCTUARY WOULD BE? I CAN SEE WHY  
SOME PEOPLE ARE COMPLAINING. IT'S A  
GOOD FISHING GROUND.

I KNOW BUT THE SANCTUARY IS ONLY 13  
HECTARES, A SMALL PORTION OF THE AREA. WE HAVE EXPERTS FROM  
THE FISH PROJECT HELPING US. THEY SAY THIS AREA IS A GOOD PLACE  
FOR A SANCTUARY. WE WANT TO LOCATE THE SANCTUARY WHERE IT  
HAS A GOOD CHANCE TO SUCCEED, DON'T WE?



THEN THE HARD WORK BEGAN.

NILO, BUDDY!  
THANK GOODNESS  
YOU'RE HERE!



WE CAUGHT HIM  
FISHING INSIDE THE  
SANCTUARY, SIR.

WHY NOT THERE?  
COME ON! THAT'S WHERE THE  
FISH ARE, PEOPLE. HAHA.



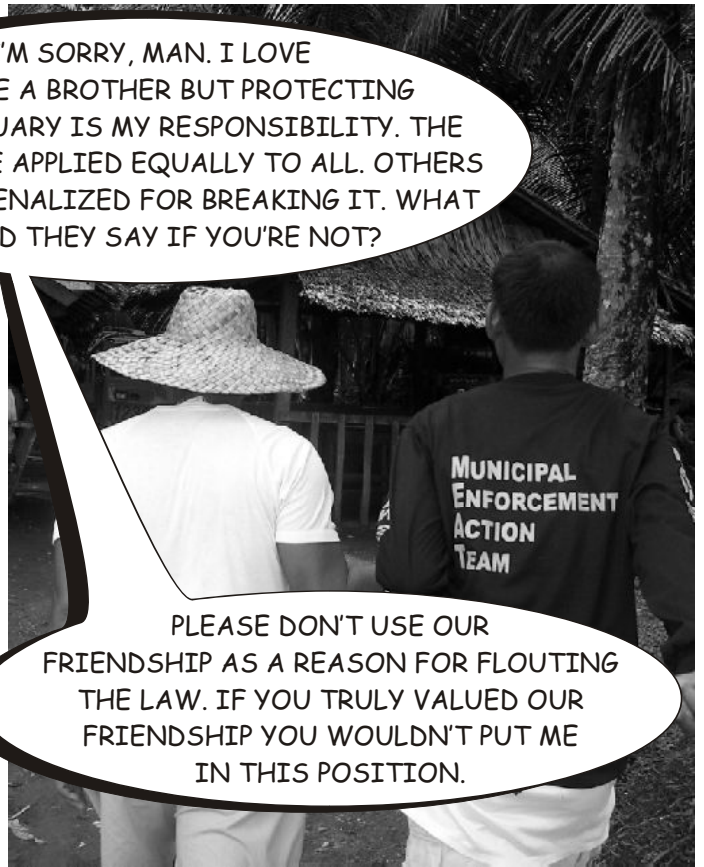
AWW MAN, WHY DID YOU  
HAVE TO DO THAT? YOU KNOW VERY WELL  
NOBODY IS ALLOWED TO FISH IN THE  
SANCTUARY.



YOU'RE NOT GOING TO  
HELP ME? YOUR LONG-TIME  
BUDDY? COME ON. WE'RE  
PRACTICALLY FAMILY!



I'M SORRY, MAN. I LOVE YOU LIKE A BROTHER BUT PROTECTING THE SANCTUARY IS MY RESPONSIBILITY. THE LAW MUST BE APPLIED EQUALLY TO ALL. OTHERS HAVE BEEN PENALIZED FOR BREAKING IT. WHAT WOULD THEY SAY IF YOU'RE NOT?



PLEASE DON'T USE OUR FRIENDSHIP AS A REASON FOR FLOUTING THE LAW. IF YOU TRULY VALUED OUR FRIENDSHIP YOU WOULDN'T PUT ME IN THIS POSITION.

LATER THAT DAY...



HOW DID IT GO?  
HOW'S MY FRIEND?

SIR, I BROUGHT HIM TO THE POLICE STATION. HE'S SPENDING THE NIGHT THERE AND IS QUITE UNDERSTANDABLY UPSET. BUT HE SHOULD GET OVER IT. HE'LL HAVE THE WHOLE NIGHT TO THINK THINGS THROUGH.

ONE YEAR LATER ...

GOOD MORNING SIR'S.  
HOW'S IT GOING?

HELLO SIR ! NOT TOO BAD !  
NOT BAD AT ALL ! WE CAUGHT  
SOME GOOD ONES TODAY.

AND GUESS WHAT?  
WE DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO  
ENTER THE SANCTUARY?  
HA HA HA !



HA HA HA ! YEAH.  
LIKE YOU COULD GET PAST OUR  
WARDENS.

LIKE WE COULDN'T. HA HA HA !  
MAN, YOU GUYS ARE FIERCE ! YOUR WARDENS HAVE  
REALLY STEPPED UP ENFORCING FISHERY LAWS ! BUT I'M GLAD,  
REALLY GLAD! I WAS A VOCAL CRITIC OF THE SANCTUARY BEFORE  
BUT HAVING FISH WARDENS AROUND HELP KEEP THE BIG  
FISHERS AWAY AND EVENS THE PLAYING FIELD  
FOR US SMALL FISHERS.



HEY, LIKE I TOLD YOU  
BEFORE IT'S WHAT THE SANCTUARY  
IS ALL ABOUT. IT'S ALL FOR YOUR -  
THE FISHERS' - BENEFIT.

I KNOW... SORRY I  
DOUBTED YOU THEN.

HEY, NO WORRIES.  
IT'S ALL GOOD. WE CAN  
COUNT ON YOUR SUPPORT  
NOW.

THANKS MAN. YOU  
CERTAINLY CAN.

ANOTHER CHANCE ENCOUNTER ...

HEY BUDDY!  
HOW ARE YOU? IT'S  
BEEN A WHILE.

HAVE YOU  
BEEN AVOIDING  
ME? STILL MAD?

HEY ! UMMM, NO HEHE.  
I MEAN I'M **NOT** STILL MAD... BUT I  
ADMIT I HAVE BEEN AVOIDING  
YOU.

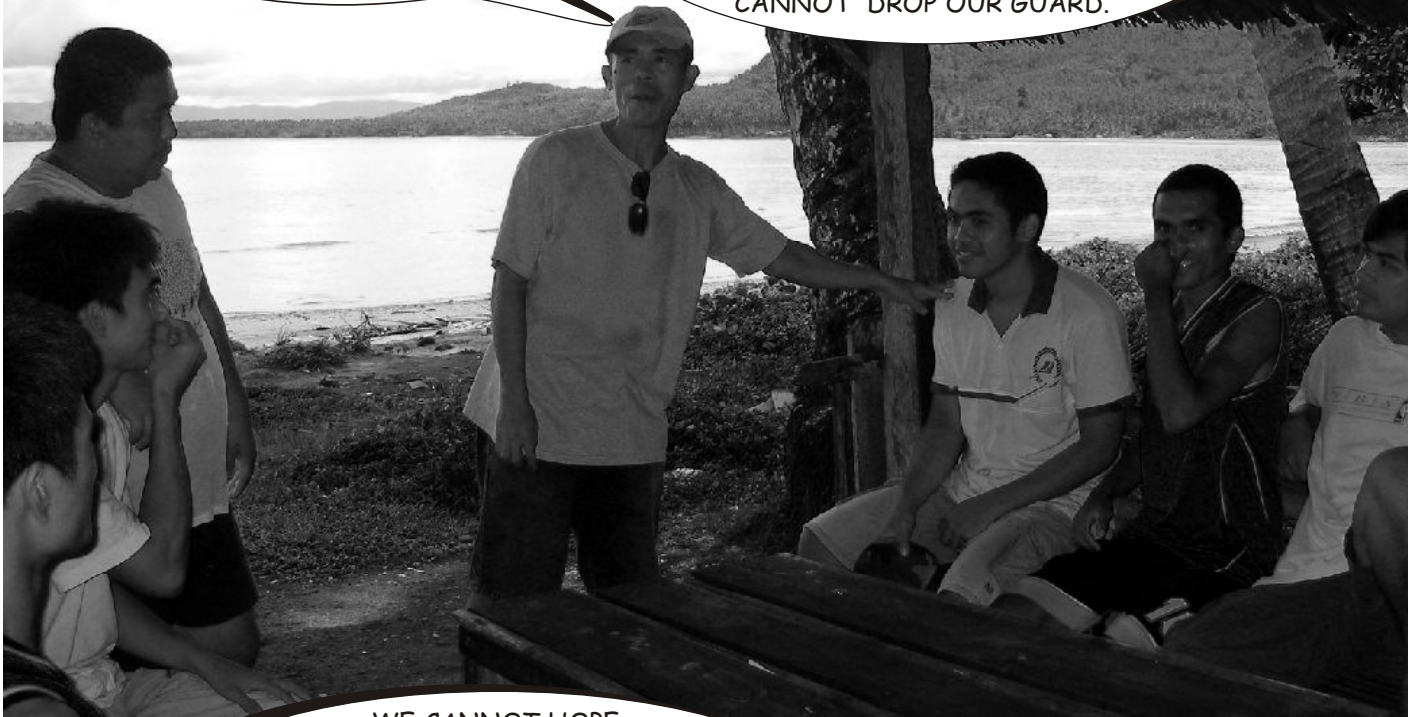
WHEN I'VE HAD TIME TO  
THINK THINGS OVER I REALIZED  
HOW WRONG I WAS TO TRY TO USE OUR  
FRIENDSHIP THAT WAY. I WAS TOO  
ASHAMED TO FACE YOU.

THAT'S WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE. I'M  
GLAD WE CAN BE FRIENDS AGAIN.

THANKS, PAL.  
I WON'T BE MAKING THE SAME  
MISTAKE, NOW THAT I UNDERSTAND  
WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO.

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING AND TO THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE HERE FOR THE FIRST TIME, WELCOME. IT'S GREAT TO SEE THAT OUR GROUP HAS GROWN.

WE HAVE ALL SEEN HOW COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR OUR SANCTUARY HAS INCREASED IN THE LAST YEAR. BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT POACHING AND ILLEGAL FISHING CONTINUE, SO WE CANNOT DROP OUR GUARD.



WE CANNOT HOPE TO CHANGE EVERYONE'S MIND, BUT WE CAN GET MORE PEOPLE ON OUR SIDE, AND THUS REDUCE THE THREAT TO OUR FISHERY RESOURCES AND GIVE THEM A BETTER CHANCE TO RECOVER.

THE KEY IS TO STAY THE COURSE, NO MATTER THE OPPOSITION.



# WOMEN

## TAKE the LEAD

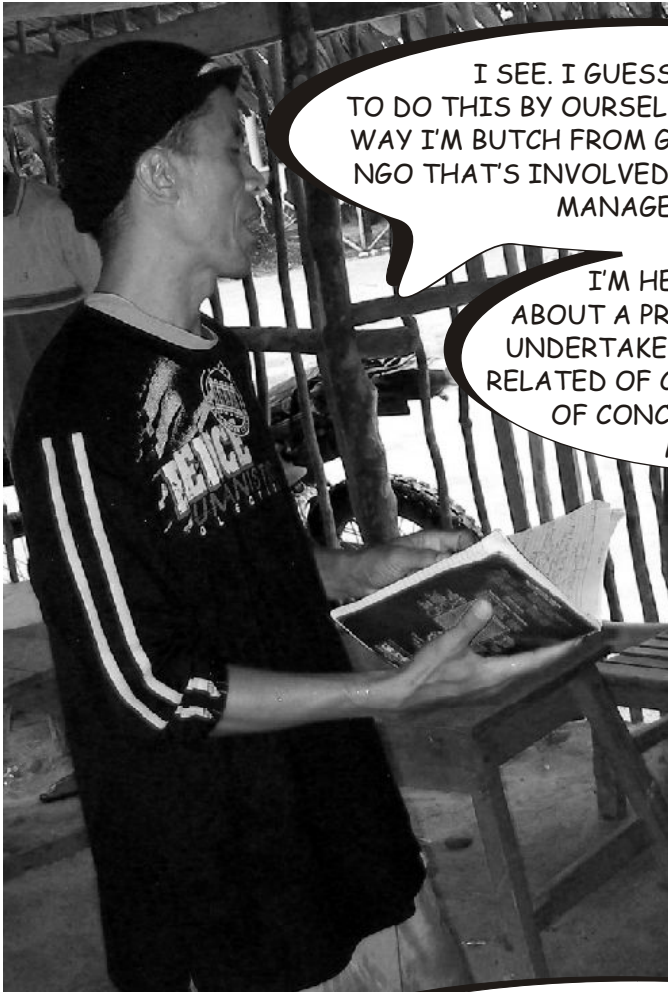


**The WOMEN of UBA.**  
CORTES, SURIGAO DEL SUR

GOOD MORNING, LADIES.  
I SEE THIS IS AN ALL-FEMALE AUDIENCE.  
WHERE ARE THE MEN?



MAYBE THEY'RE ALL  
OUT FISHING. NO TIME FOR  
MEETINGS.



I SEE. I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO DO THIS BY OURSELVES FOR NOW. BY THE WAY I'M BUTCH FROM GREEN MINDANAO, AN NGO THAT'S INVOLVED IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT.

I'M HERE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT A PROJECT THAT WE HOPE TO UNDERTAKE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY, RELATED OF COURSE TO OUR MAIN AREA OF CONCERN: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT.



FIRST OFF, I'D LIKE TO ASK: WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ENVIRONMENT-RELATED PROBLEM HERE?

WELL, WE'RE ALL DEPENDENT ON FISHING HERE TO SOME EXTENT, SO I'D HAVE TO SAY DECLINING FISH CATCH.



IS THAT ENVIRONMENT-RELATED? I'D THINK IT'S ECONOMIC.



IT COULD BE BOTH. YOUR CATCH HAS GONE DOWN, AFFECTING YOUR INCOME. BUT THE UNDERLYING ISSUE MAY BE HABITAT LOSS OR OVERFISHING, WHICH IS BASICALLY AN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE.

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED TO HAVE A MARINE SANCTUARY FOR YOUR VILLAGE? THIS IS A NO-FISHING AREA WHERE FISH CAN BREED AND GROW UNDISTURBED AND THEIR HABITATS ARE ALLOWED TO RECOVER.



SOUNDS GOOD ! I SAY LET'S TALK ABOUT IT.

**YEAH !**

A FEW MONTHS  
LATER ...

HEY NEIGHBOR ! WE'RE  
BUILDING A GUARDHOUSE FOR  
OUR MARINE SANCTUARY. COME  
AND HELP US !

HELP YOU ? LADIES, I THINK THE  
SANCTUARY IS A CRAZY IDEA. WHY WOULD  
I HELP YOU?

CRAZY?! WHY WOULD  
YOU THINK IT'S CRAZY?

COME ON ! EVEN  
THE MAYOR IS WITH US  
ON THIS!



YOU'RE SUPPORTING A PROJECT THAT WILL CLOSE OUR FISHING GROUND. YOU DON'T CALL THAT CRAZY?



YOU'RE EXAGGERATING. THE SANCTUARY IS NOT GOING TO TAKE UP ALL OF OUR FISHING GROUND. AND IT WILL IMPROVE FISH YIELDS EVENTUALLY. YOU'LL SEE.



WELL, THEN. I GUESS I'LL WAIT AND SEE. GOOD DAY, LADIES.



UH OH. HE'S RUNNING AWAY. HEY! COME BACK! HAHA!

LAZY BUM...

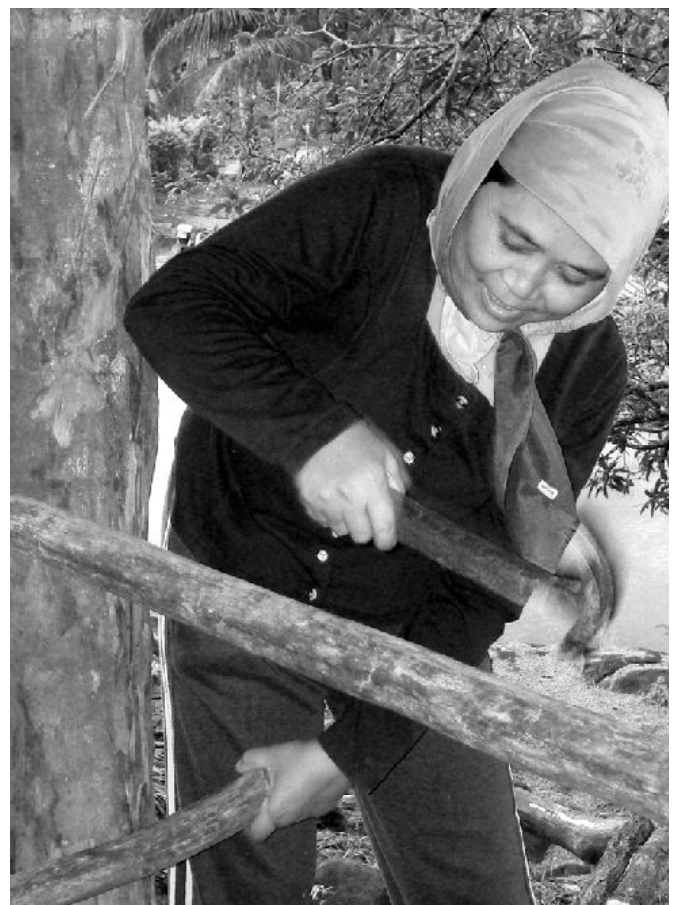
OH WELL. LET'S GO JOIN THE OTHERS.



NO LUCK WITH MY HUSBAND EITHER. HE SAYS WE'RE WASTING OUR TIME.

MEN...I CAN'T WAIT TO PROVE THEM WRONG.SO LET'S DO THIS SISTERS! WE HAVE A SANCTUARY TO GUARD AND A GUARDHOUSE TO BUILD!







A FEW YEARS LATER ...

I HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR YOU. OUR VILLAGE HAS BEEN CHOSEN FOR ASSISTANCE BY THE LGU AND USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT. THEY WANT A PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION TO TRAIN IN COASTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR MARINE SANCTUARY.

I RECOMMENDED YOUR GROUP. THEY WILL BE HERE NEXT WEEK. WILL YOU BE AVAILABLE TO MEET WITH THEM?

YES MA'AM, OF COURSE. THANK YOU. WE WILL BE THERE.

VILLAGE CHAIRMAN ARNULFA DUENAS, THANK YOU, MA'AM FOR BRINGING EVERYONE HERE. IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK. AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW I'M NOW WITH THE FISH PROJECT. IT'S GOOD TO SEE THAT THE MEN ARE WELL-REPRESENTED. ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THE WAY YOUR SANCTUARY HAS WORKED OUT?

YES SIR! I CHANGED MY MIND WHEN I SAW THE FISH COME BACK. BUT WE NOW HAVE FISHERS FROM OTHER VILLAGES COMING HERE, TRYING TO POACH ON THE SANCTUARY.

THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THREATS. YOU HAVE TO REMAIN VIGILANT. WE'LL TRAIN SOME OF YOU AS FISH WARDENS AND HELP YOU BUILD A NEW GUARDHOUSE. LET'S DRAW UP A PLAN TO PROTECT THE SANCTUARY 24/7.



WOW. YOU GOT YOUR FISH WARDEN UNIFORM. CONGRATS! YOU MEN WILL TAKE NIGHT DUTY, WON'T YOU? NOW DON'T GO SLEEPING ON THE JOB, YOUNG MAN.



AW GRAMS. YOU KNOW YOU CAN COUNT ON ME. I'M A CHANGED MAN. I NOW BELIEVE 100% THAT THE SANCTUARY IS ONE OF THE BEST THINGS TO EVER HAPPEN FOR OUR VILLAGE. I'LL PROTECT IT THE BEST WAY I KNOW HOW.

**THE END**

# COMING *into her* OWN

**MA. LOURDES 'Maria' ALVAREZ.**  
DEPUTY FISH WARDEN, TALULURA, BINTUAN,  
CORON, PALAWAN

ONE OF 12 CHILDREN, MARIA GREW UP IN CORON TOWN IN NORTHERN PALAWAN, WHERE HER PARENTS MIGRATED FROM BOHOL WHEN SHE WAS ONE YEAR OLD. HER PARENTS WERE MOLDED IN THE OLD SCHOOL, HOLDING TRADITIONAL VIEWS OF A WOMAN'S ROLE AS A HOUSEWIFE WHO DIDN'T NEED EDUCATION. EACH DAY, SHE WATCHED HER BROTHERS GO TO SCHOOL, HOPING SHE WOULD GET THE SAME CHANCE. SHE FINALLY ENTERED 1ST GRADE WHEN SHE WAS 10, BUT HER SCHOOLING WAS INTERRUPTED DURING A TROUBLED PHASE IN HER TEENS. SEEKING SOLACE IN A CONVENT IN MANILA, SHE REKINDLED HER DREAM OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION, AND WOULD AGAIN BE FRUSTRATED.





CALLED BACK TO CORON BECAUSE SHE WAS "NEEDED AT HOME," SHE HAD TO FORGO FURTHER EDUCATION AND SOON GOT MARRIED TO A MAN OF HER PARENTS' CHOOSING. SHE FOCUSED HER ENERGY ON RAISING A FAMILY UNTIL YEARS LATER, WHEN SHE FOUND A NEW CALLING.

IT WAS 2004. VILLAGE CHAIRMAN YURI PALANCA CALLED THEM TO A MEETING TO DISCUSS A MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT PLAN TO SET UP A MARINE SANCTUARY NEAR THEIR COMMUNITY.

WE WILL NEED VOLUNTEERS TO MANAGE AND GUARD THE SANCTUARY. THOSE OF YOU WHO WANT TO PARTICIPATE WILL BE TRAINED WITH THE HELP OF THE USAID/BFAR FISH PROJECT.

WHEN WE'RE READY, WE WILL START COLLECTING USER FEES FROM TOURISTS THAT COME HERE TO DIVE OR SNORKEL, SO WE WILL NEED PEOPLE THAT CAN DO PATROL DUTY AROUND THE CLOCK.



MARIA VOLUNTEERED AND TRAINED TO BE A FISH WARDEN...



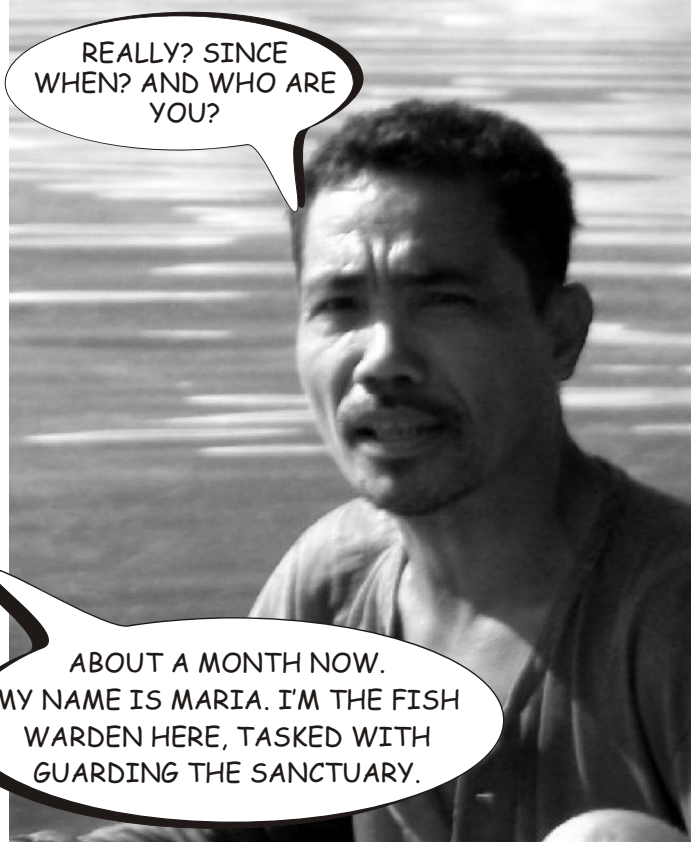
... AND WAS SOON HARD AT WORK GUARDING THE SANCTUARY.

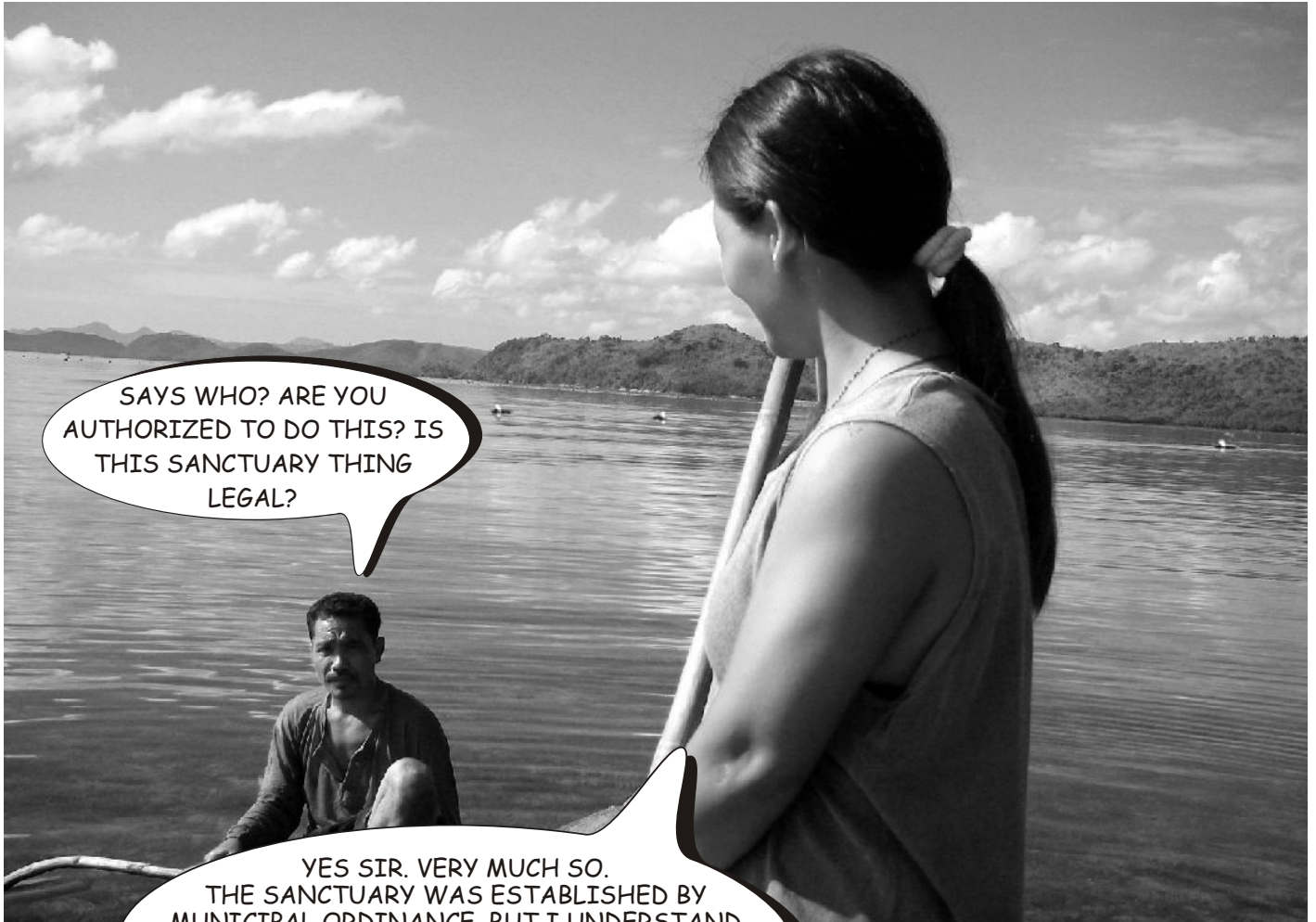
HELLO, SIR. SIR, I'M SORRY BUT YOU'RE IN THE NO-ENTRY ZONE OF A MARINE SANCTUARY YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE IN HERE.



REALLY? SINCE WHEN? AND WHO ARE YOU?

ABOUT A MONTH NOW. MY NAME IS MARIA. I'M THE FISH WARDEN HERE, TASKED WITH GUARDING THE SANCTUARY.





SAYS WHO? ARE YOU AUTHORIZED TO DO THIS? IS THIS SANCTUARY THING LEGAL?

YES SIR. VERY MUCH SO. THE SANCTUARY WAS ESTABLISHED BY MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE. BUT I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN. I GUESS THE BEST THING IS TO CHECK WITH THE MAYOR AND THE VILLAGE CHIEF. WE GET OUR ORDERS FROM THEM.



I'LL DO THAT.

THANK YOU SO MUCH. I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR COOPERATION. PLEASE MOVE BACK TO THAT AREA BEYOND THOSE BUOYS. AND HAVE A GOOD DAY, SIR.

FOUR YEARS LATER...

HEY, GOOD MORNING!  
YOU WERE JUST HERE  
YESTERDAY! MORE  
GUESTS?

HELLO, MARIA!  
YES, I HAVE FOUR  
TICKETS HERE FOR YOU.

YOU'RE BRINGING  
IN MORE VISITORS THAN  
YOU USED TO.

DIVERS AND SNORKELERS  
TELL US THEY LIKE IT HERE. I GUESS WORD  
IS SPREADING THAT THE REEF IN THIS AREA  
IS BEAUTIFUL. IT'S REALLY IMPROVED SO  
MUCH FROM A FEW YEARS AGO.



THAT'S WONDERFUL!  
PLEASE TELL THEM THAT WE  
APPRECIATE THEY'RE ENJOYING THE  
PLACE AND THAT THE FEES THEY PAY  
HELP KEEP OUR REEF PROTECTED  
AND HEALTHY.

OF COURSE.  
I TELL THEM ALL  
THE TIME.

REALLY? WOW! THANK  
YOU! SO I'LL SEE YOU  
AROUND. TAKE CARE!



AH, YOU'RE HOME  
FROM SCHOOL AND RIGHT  
ON TIME, TOO! HERE,  
GIRLS, CATCH THIS!

YES, MAMA.



ARE THESE YOUR OLD PHOTOS? CAN I LOOK?

OF COURSE. WHEN YOUR HOMEWORK'S DONE.

IT'S DONE.



IS THAT YOU, MA? COOL! YOU LIVED IN A CONVENT?

YES. I WANTED TO FINISH SCHOOL, BE A NUN, HELP PEOPLE.

BUT IT WASN'T MEANT TO BE. YOUR GRANDPA AND GRANDMA BELIEVED GIRLS WERE SUPPOSED TO GET MARRIED AND BE STAY-AT-HOME MOMS, SO THEY WOULDN'T LET ME GO TO SCHOOL.



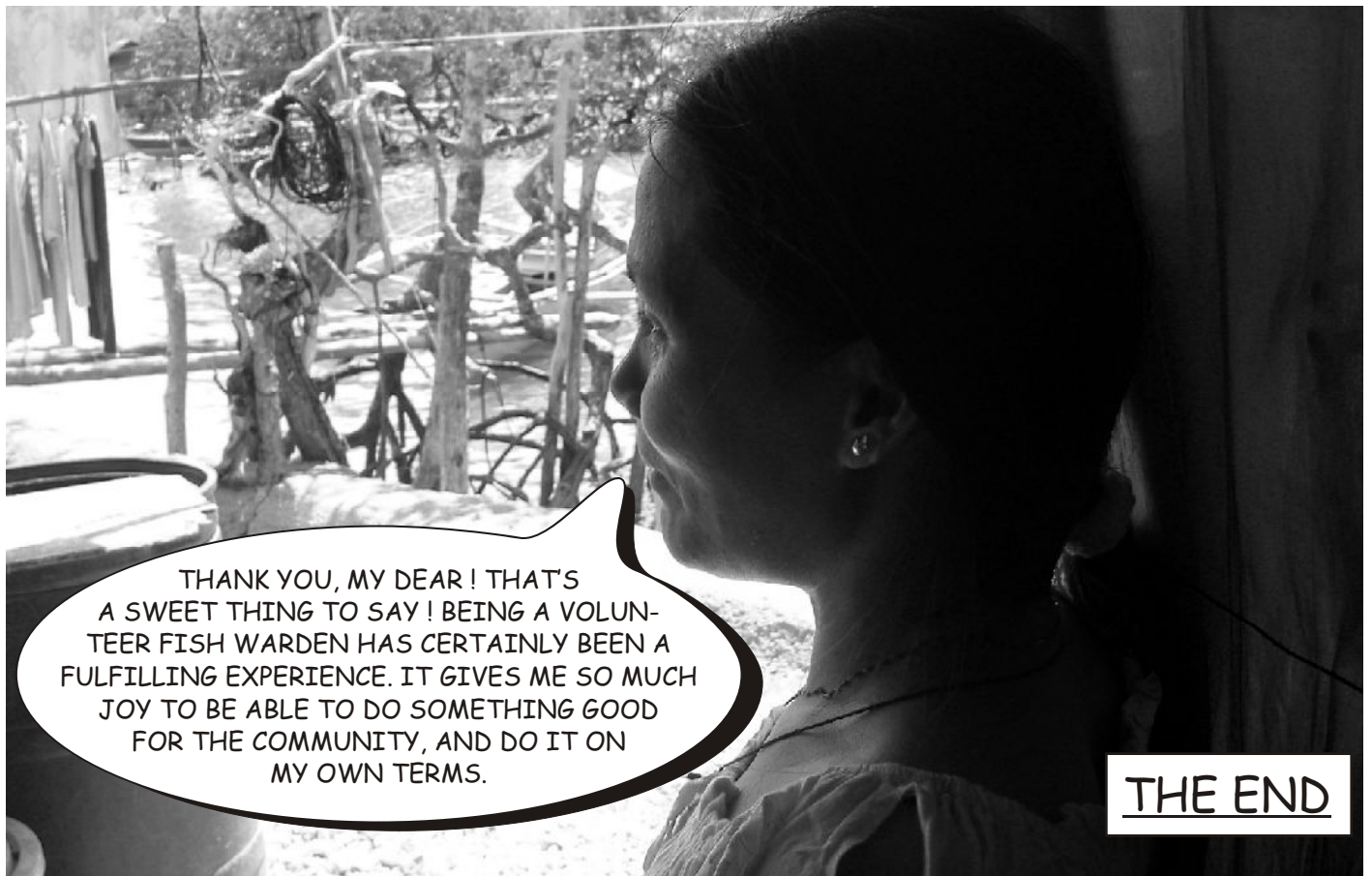


BUT, MA, YOU'RE NOT A STAY-AT-HOME MOM.



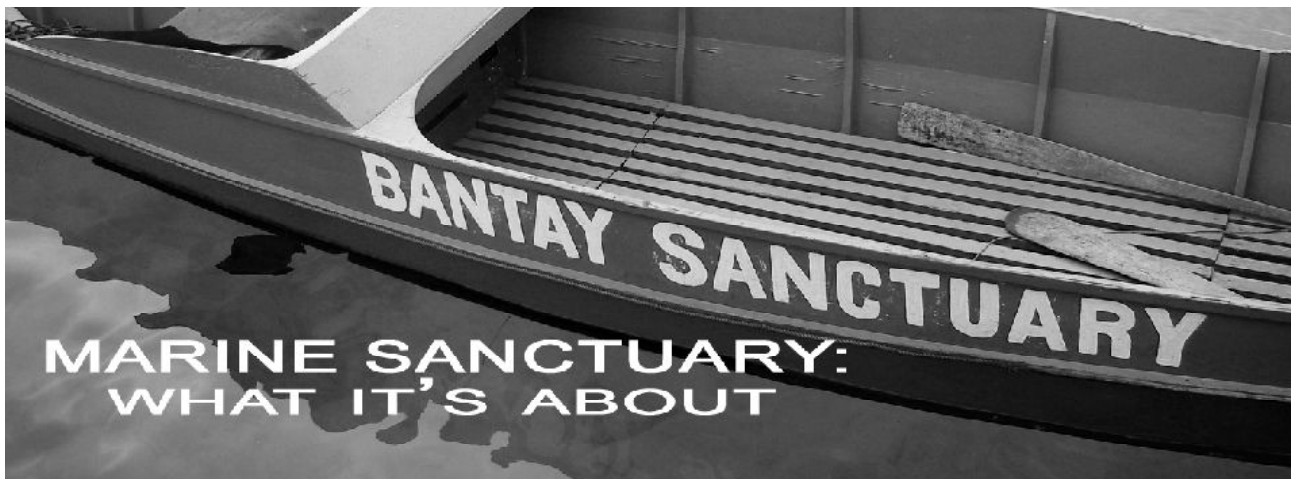
SO YOUR GRANDPARENTS WERE WRONG ABOUT THAT, AND ALSO ABOUT SCHOOL. GIRLS DO NEED AND SHOULD GO TO SCHOOL.

YEAH! AND YOUR WORK AT THE SANCTUARY IS HELPING PEOPLE!



THANK YOU, MY DEAR! THAT'S A SWEET THING TO SAY! BEING A VOLUNTEER FISH WARDEN HAS CERTAINLY BEEN A FULFILLING EXPERIENCE. IT GIVES ME SO MUCH JOY TO BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY, AND DO IT ON MY OWN TERMS.

**THE END**



### *What is a marine sanctuary?*

A marine sanctuary is a protected area within the municipal waters where fishing is strictly regulated or entirely prohibited and human access may be restricted. It is usually established by an ordinance to rehabilitate and replenish fishery and coastal resources in an area known to have an important ecological function as a spawning and/or feeding ground for one marine species or a group of species. A marine sanctuary may form all or part of a marine protected area (MPA).

### *Why do we need a marine sanctuary?*

Marine sanctuaries are an effective way to control fishing effort, protect breeding and juvenile fishes, guard against overfishing and ensure a sustainable supply of fish stock. Studies indicate that a square kilometer of protected reefs can produce up to 30 MT of fish per year. Marine sanctuaries are particularly effective as a management tool directed at promoting the long-term productivity of shallow-water fisheries, especially in the Philippines, where about 10-15% of marine fish production is supplied by coral reefs. They work in a number of ways:

1. By restricting exploitation of fish stocks, marine sanctuaries give different species the chance to freely reproduce. Species like grouper, parrotfish and snappers do not breed until they are 4-6 years old. Without protection, these fishes are usually caught when they are only 2-3 years old. They are thus unable to breed and at high risk of extinction.
2. Marine sanctuaries promote the rehabilitation and recovery of degraded coral reefs. The recovery of coral reefs after several years of protection in sanctuaries across the Philippines has been well documented.
3. Because of the protection accorded marine species in the sanctuary, fishes inside the reserve area (where fishing is strictly prohibited) grow faster and multiply easily. This leads to a faster turn-over of fishes from the reserve to the non-reserve area (where passive, nondestructive fishing is allowed), which increases fish yield for the fishermen. It has been proven that fishermen get more fish from 75% of a reef area during periods of protection than from 100% of the area when there is no

protection. By providing a safe refuge for breeders and juveniles, fish stocks increase rapidly and spill over into the surrounding reefs where they become available to fishermen. Generally, fishermen see significant increases in reef fish populations within six months after improved living coral cover and reef fish harvests have been documented. This indicates that fish inside the reserve area move out or “spill over” to the non-reserve area where they are caught by fishermen.

### *How soon can fishers and others directly dependent on coastal resources realize the benefits of a marine sanctuary?*

Marine reserves generally begin to show significantly enhanced fish yields (up to 49% increase) after 3-4 years, and in the 10th year, fish yields appear to double. At least initially, alternative environment-friendly livelihood projects should be set up for the community to offset potential decreases in fishers’ income resulting from the restrictions on fishing. Ecotourism is one area for development. Marine sanctuaries with good reefs are typically developed as dive spots where recreational activities are controlled with only snorkeling, scuba diving and underwater photography allowed. These sanctuaries also serve as educational centers where visitors can learn about coral reefs and other marine ecosystems. Visitors are often required to pay entrance and dive fees, which go to the maintenance of the sanctuaries. In addition, fishers and their families can directly benefit from tourism-related enterprises, such as selling T-shirts and souvenir items.

### *Why must the community be involved in the management of marine sanctuaries?*

Protected areas have traditionally been set up by government agencies to keep people from overexploiting biologically and ecologically important resources. But this approach, especially with the steady increase in population pressure and demand for land and resources, has proved to be difficult to implement in the marine environment, where resources cannot be fenced off and are moreover considered “common property” and therefore available to everyone. Any attempt

to restrict access to marine resources is bound to cause resentment among those people who depend on these resources for livelihood. This is one reason why the community-based approach has become popular. "Involving the community can reduce the conflict which often arises in MPA establishment where the best sites for conservation are also those most economically valuable," said Susan Wells and Alan White in *Marine Protected Areas: Principles and Techniques for Management*. Another author noted, "With involvement comes understanding, with understanding comes public support and commitment."

Wells and White listed the following benefits from community involvement in the management of marine sanctuaries and other protected areas:

1. In areas with potential as a dive destination, employment opportunities may arise around the MPA, through the growth of services such as hotels and restaurants. Sharing of economic benefits from the MPA can increase income for local people, for example, from user fees (e.g. tour operators and entrance fees) and visitor facilities (accommodation, transport, food, guides, etc.).
2. A successful MPA may result in improved yields in local fisheries.
3. Community involvement can facilitate enforcement of regulations, as local people will understand and accept their purpose more readily.
4. The community can assist or even be responsible for enforcement, thus reducing costs to government agencies. They can make their own rules as these apply to their community, and they can enforce the rules in two ways — the formal way using fines and prison sentences and the informal way using cultural, religious and social sanctions.
5. Where there are financial constraints, local people can be mobilized to help develop interpretive programs and assist with education.

### What processes are involved in the establishment of a marine sanctuary?

The establishment of a community-based marine sanctuary requires an integrated approach involving several components which may or may not occur simultaneously. It is generally based on the following framework:

1. **Community Organizing.** This process involves organizing and empowering the members of the community to manage the sanctuary, implement rules and regulations, impose sanctions against violators, and in general take the major responsibility for day-to-day decisionmaking and management of the resources.
2. **Community Education.** This is a continuing process that starts even before the sanctuary is established. At the outset, there should be an awareness and public education campaign to explain to stakeholders what a marine sanctuary is all about, including principles of ecology, condition of the environment and the benefits of proper resource management. This campaign must

continue throughout the management process, to explain new rules, engage new players or stakeholders in the process and constantly remind all stakeholders of the purpose of the sanctuary.

3. **Establishing a marine sanctuary.** Community participation is key in the establishment of a sanctuary. This allows community members to understand the process, and thus help them manage the sanctuary better.
4. **Legislation.** Scientific information and community acceptance are the bases for establishing a marine sanctuary, but it is the law that institutionalizes and gives it legitimacy. Laws enable sanctuary managers to enforce the regulations necessary to effectively manage the sanctuary.
5. **Sustainability.** There is no end to the process of ensuring the sustainability of a marine sanctuary. It involves continuous education and strengthening of community organizations. It means getting all sectors to work together and continuously developing in people a sense of ownership and responsibility for the resources they have committed to protect.

### References & Recommended Reading

- Alcala, A.C. 1988. Effects of protective management of marine reserves on fish abundances and fish yields in the Philippines. *Ambio* 17: 194-199.
- CRMP (Coastal Resource Management Project). 2000. Establishing a Community-Based Marine Sanctuary. Silliman University and the Coastal Resource Management Project of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Cebu City. Published electronically at <http://oneocean.org>. 74 p.
- Deguit, E. Community Participation in Coastal Resource Management through the Community Organization Method. Unpublished. Undated.
- Hermes, R. 1998. Establishment, maintenance and monitoring of marine protected areas, A guidebook. Philippine Business for Social Progress, Manila, 63 p.
- Salm, R.V. and J.R. Clark. 1984. Marine and coastal protected areas: A guide for planners and managers. International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, Gland, Switzerland, 302 p.
- Savina, G.C. and A.T. White. 1986. A tale of two islands: Some lessons for marine resource management. *Env. Conserv.* 13 (2): 107-113. *Unos* Vol. 1 No. 3, 15 June 1997.
- Walters, J.S., J. Maragos, S. Siar and A.T. White, 1998. Participatory Coastal Resources Assessment: A handbook for community workers and coastal resource managers. Coastal Resources Management Project, Silliman University and Center of Excellence in Coastal Resources Management, Cebu City, Philippines, 113 p.
- Uychiaoco, A.J., S.J. Green, M.T. dela Cruz, P.A. Gaite, H.O. Arceo, P.M. Aliño, and A.T. White. 2010. Coral Reef Monitoring for Management. UP-MSI, UNDP-GEF-Small Grants Program, Guiuan Development Foundation, Inc., Voluntary Service Overseas, UP Center for Integration and Development Studies, Coastal Resource Management Project, Philippine Environmental Governance Project 2, and Fisheries Resource Management Project. 122 p.
- Wells, S. and A.T. White. 1995. Involving the community. In *Marine protected areas: Principles and techniques for management*. Susan Gubbay (ed.). Chapman and Hall, London, pg 61-84.
- White, A.T. 1988b. The effect of community-managed marine reserves in the Philippines on their associated coral reef fish populations. *Asian Fish. Sci.* 1(2): 27-42.
- White, A.T. 1997. Planning for Integrated coastal management: What are the steps? *Tambuli: A publication for coastal management practitioners*. Coastal Resource Management Project, Cebu City, Philippines. No. 3 pp. 15-19.

Across the Philippines, the nitty-gritty work to reverse decades of destruction and indiscriminate extraction of marine resources is fueled by local sea guardians who have made marine conservation their personal advocacy. Based on true stories from six fishing communities assisted by the USAID/BFAR Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest Project, SEA GUARDIANS tells about the struggles and triumphs of these homegrown champions as they stand up for their chosen cause. The stories are told in both words and pictures and feature the main protagonists playing themselves, along with other community members portraying various roles.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



The Fisheries Improved for Sustainable Harvest (FISH) Project