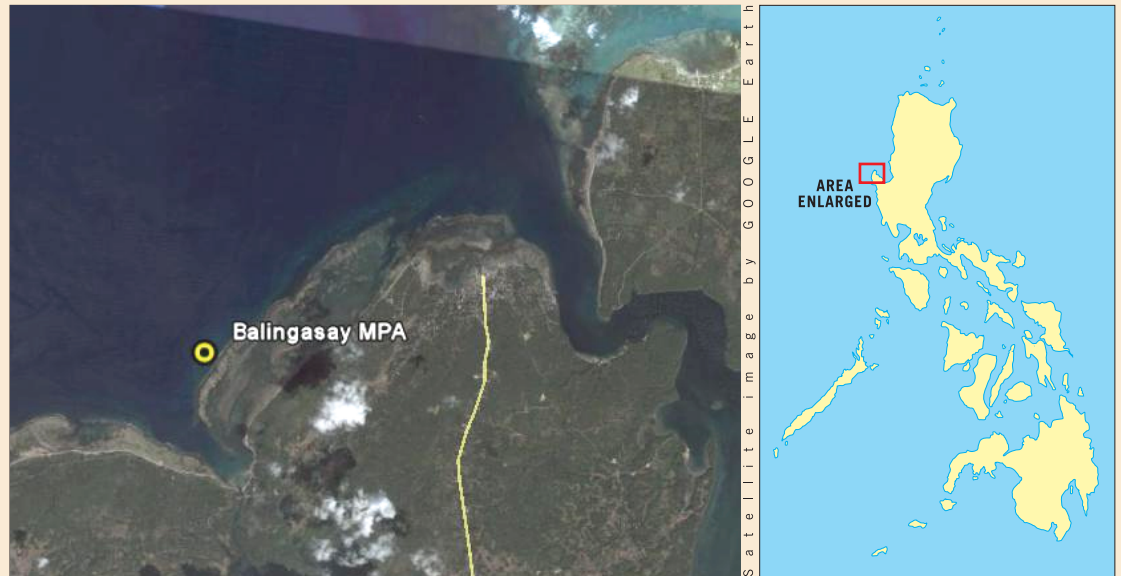


2009 Most Outstanding MPA Finalist



BALINGASAY MARINE PROTECTED AREA

Barangay Balingasay
Bolinao, Pangasinan



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The Balingasay Marine Protected Area is located at the western part of the municipality of Bolinao in Pangasinan, facing the South China Sea. The reefs of Bolinao are one of the most extensively developed reef systems and associated habitats in northern Luzon.

DESCRIPTION

- 14.77 hectares of core zone where any fishing is prohibited and a 186.09 hectares buffer zone where only traditional fishing gears are allowed
- First established MPA in Region I
- Established in 1998 through the efforts and persistence of the local community
- Managed by the Samahan ng Magsasaka at Mangingisda sa Balingasay (SAMMABAL)

NOTEWORTHY FLORA AND FAUNA

- Reef fishes dominated by diverse species of pomacentrids, acanthurids, and labrids
- Extensive cover of *Heliopora coerulea*

KEY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Support from local government unit for the implementation of the MPA (e.g., 30 liters/month for patrolling)
- Maintenance of a fish stall by SAMMABAL and the Barangay Council as a livelihood project earning ~P2,000 / month
- Reforestation of Balingasay River to reduce siltation impacts on the reefs
- Training on participatory biophysical monitoring
- Reseeding of sea urchins
- Implementation of fisheries registration and licensing
- Information and education campaigns (IEC) conducted at least twice a year



IMPACTS

- Increase in density of reef fishes and sea urchins observed by fisherfolks two years after establishment
- Increased participation of community members in patrolling and management of the MPA
- Steady increase in reef fish biomass observed starting in 2004
- Increased tourist arrivals



THREATS

- Some poaching activities due to insufficient logistical and financial resources to patrol the area regularly
- Siltation from the Balingasay river and vulnerability to high temperature fluctuations during El Niño events pose natural threats to the reefs
- Overfishing is still very high in the surrounding areas



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Intensify IEC activities
- facilitate clearer patrolling and management agreement among SAMMABAL, Barangay Council and the municipal government
- develop more profitable livelihood projects other than the fish stall
- formulate tourism development plan to implement tourist/user fees
- encourage the municipal government to complement SAMMABAL in patrolling
- request the LGU to increase budget allocation to cover the operational expenses (e.g. repair of patrol boats and guardhouse, replacement of lost marker buoys, among others).

