

The National Wetlands Action Plan for the Philippines 2011-2016



**Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau
Department of Environment and Natural Resources**

Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Nature Center
North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

PART II Updating the 1993 National Wetland Action Plan: The Process

1.0 Desk Review and Small Group Workshops

There were three stages in updating the 1993 National Wetlands Action Plan. The first stage was the review of initiatives implemented since the Plan was prepared. Four Technical Working Groups were formed representing focal areas of concern namely Freshwater Wetlands, Marine and Coastal Wetlands, Wetlands Policy, and Enabling Activities. Each group compiled information from various sources and reviewed the consolidated information guided by the following questions:

- What is the state of the particular group of wetlands?
- Are all the current (and future) issues and concerns the confronting wetlands identified in the said documents? If not, which ones were not included?
- Are they adequately addressed by the strategies/action plans/activities in the national, regional and local plans?
- If not, identify strategies and activities that will adequately address them.
- To the extent possible, identify tasking (as to agency/organization who will implement the strategy/activity); timetable; outputs; targets and indicators.

Key reference materials that were reviewed included the following:

- The National Wetlands Action Plan for the Republic of the Philippines
- Protection and Sustainable Use of Wetland Resources in the Philippines
- National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use and Protection of Philippine Peatlands
- National Report on Wetlands (UNEP/GEF Project: Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand)
- Proceedings of the First National Lake Congress on Philippine Lakes
- National Ecotourism Strategy
- Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Priorities
- Key Biodiversity Areas
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)
- Country Report – Seagrasses of the Philippines
- Country Report – Corals
- Country Report - Mangrove
- Integrated River Basin Management and Development Plan
- ArcDev – A framework for Sustainable Archipelagic Development (draft)
- Verde Island Passage Marine Corridor Management Plan Framework (draft)
- Integrated Water Resources Management Plan Framework
- Invasive Alien Species in the Philippines: Status, Challenges and Directions

Although targets and indicators were not specified in the 1993 NWAPP, the results of the review and assessment of its implementation showed that many of the activities were

implemented but the outcomes were not assessed. Additionally, the strategies have to be updated in light of new developments and issues such as threats from climate change.

2.0 Stakeholders Recommendations: The Dumaguete Conference

As a result of the review, working documents were prepared for the National Conference on Wetlands, Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity Conservation held in Dumaguete City on 12-14 January 2009. The Dumaguete Conference marked the second stage of plan formulation. At the Dumaguete Conference, the working documents were presented and subjected to further discussion and validation. There were two main outputs at the Conference, a Conference Resolution and the elements of an updated National Wetlands Action Plan for the Philippines (NWAPP). The Conference Resolution recognized the importance of wetlands to humanity and to nature, its critical state owing to the various threats on these ecosystems, and strongly affirmed that the concerned authorities particularly the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Philippine Congress, and the Local Government Units, take action in implementing the priority activities endorsed by the participants. The updated National Wetlands Action Plan took into account how wetlands are affected by extreme climatic changes and the important role the wetlands play in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

After the Dumaguete Conference, the outputs were further subjected to iteration and refinement by the Ad Hoc National Committee on Wetlands whose membership was constituted at the Dumaguete Conference. A Final Workshop was convened which was attended by the Ad Hoc Committee Members, TWG members and other key personalities who helped in crafting the document. The output of the Final Workshop, which is the updated National Wetlands Action Plan for the Philippines was turned over to the DENR. The Plan will be then brought to a nationwide consultation with key stakeholders to ensure ownership, advocate and solicit partners for its implementation.

3.0 Regional Consultations and Integration Writeshop

The draft NWAPP was subjected to a series of Regional Consultations to ensure that all key stakeholders are involved in the review and are able to provide inputs to the draft National Wetlands Action Plan. Specifically, it aims to:

- Prioritize specific wetlands for management and identify their management needs through participatory processes
- Identify partners and their roles (specific responsibility centers), resources available and solicit commitments for its implementation
- To solicit the endorsement of the updated NWAP by stakeholders

The consultations were held on the following dates and venues:

- Luzon Consultation - 11-12 November 2010 at Cloud 9 Sports and Leisure Club
- Visayas and Mindanao – 2-3 December 2010 at the Villa Margarita Hotel

There were 60 participants in the Luzon group and 38 for the Visayas-Mindanao group. These participants were from various sectors of society that affect or are affected by wetlands. An Integration Writeshop was held at the Camelot Hotel in Quezon City on January 6, 2011 to consolidate and rationalize regional consultation outputs and to assign targets for identified activities whenever possible.

4.0 Mainstreaming the NWAPP: Adoption and Institutionalization

The Ad-Hoc Technical Working Group was convened in September 23, 2011 to review the consolidated outputs from the Integration writeshop. This version is the final product of these series of consultations and iterations.

The National Wetlands Action Plan for the Philippines will eventually be adopted and institutionalized among the concerned government agencies and serve as a guide in for wetland management by the other sectors of society.