



INTERNATIONAL WATERS RESULTS NOTES

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Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand

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1. Eleven permanent seagrass monitoring sites were established near Bolinao; five on Santiago Island and six in coastal barangays on the mainland.
2. Sites in Hepu and Bolinao were established as seagrass conservation sites, sustainable use zones, and seagrass sanctuaries, giving the flora in the area time to recover from previous degradation and prevent it from future damages.
3. In Hepu, a task force composed of over 300 people removed 50,000 illegal wooden posts, 1 shelter, and 13 illegal mollusk culture areas

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project objective was to restore degraded areas, reduce threats, and provide preventative actions to these threats through managing sea grass resources, coordinating mechanisms, developing management plans, raising public awareness of degradation and its effects.

RESULTS: PROCESS

INDICATOR#1 (Training on seagrass conservation and protection)

The training of local stakeholders was considered essential to counteracting further degradation, so to this effect two training courses were set up in Bolinao, one on seagrass taxonomy which included 50 trainees, and another on waste management which included 64 trainees. In addition, training on “Seagrass Watch” methods was conducted for local fishermen, officials, and local government personnel.

INDICATOR#2 (Addressing land-based pollution)

The main outputs which dealt with counteracting land pollution included creating seven (7) national reports on land based pollution in the participating countries, six (6) National Action Plans for addressing the issues of land-based pollution, an overview of land-based pollution problems in the South China Sea, a model for riverine inputs of nutrients that can be used in management decision making, and the identification of areas sensitive to inputs of nutrients from rivers bordering the South China Sea.

INDICATOR#3 (Regional task force on economic evaluation)

A regional task force on economic evaluation published simplified guidelines on the procedures to be used in the economic valuation of coastal goods and services, created a regional database of empirical data relating to the economic value of coastal ecosystem goods and services, instituted a procedure for determining regional values of coastal ecosystem goods and services, and constructed a cost-benefit analysis of the actions proposed in the SAP.

RESULTS: STRESS REDUCTION

INDICATOR#1 (Cleanup of degraded areas)

The Hepu Seagrass Demonstration Site mobilized a task force of over 300 people and 12 vessels which covered an area of 1,100 hectares and resulted in the removal of over 50,000 illegal wooden posts and one shelter and the cleaning of 13 illegal mollusk culture areas

INDICATOR#2 (Sustainability of seagrass sites)

At the Hepu seagrass demonstration site, 200 of the 300 available hectares of seagrass were designated as a sustainable use zone, while The local House of Representatives of Bintan adopted a spatial plan (Perda No. 14/2007) under which different zones were designated: a conservation zone for habitat protection with bans on resort and hotel construction, a buffer zone with specific regulations for each activity, and a general coastal tourism zone.

A Bolinao Seagrass Sanctuary was created, covering 60 hectares of land, including a 20 ha. core zone and a 40 ha. buffer zone.

INDICATOR#3 (Designation of land for conservation)

A National Seagrass Nature Reserve was established in Hepu, and will be provided with permanent annual budget allocations to ensure financial stability. The mayor of Bolinao Municipality promulgated a series of municipal ordinances to create small scale marine protected areas and sanctuaries, including 8 for coral reefs, 8 for mangroves, and 1 for seagrass.

RESULTS: WATER RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

INDICATOR#1 (Creation of a GIS database and project website)

In order to counteract habitat degradation and loss, the project outputs included draft proposals for intervention in 23 sites across all habitat types, as well as a GIS database on the targeted sites characterizing geographical and environmental/biological conditions. In addition, there are now 11 operational demonstration sites in 6 countries, in addition to 7 new medium-sized project proposals. An interactive project website has already received over 110,000 visits and serves as a repository for the 1800 documents produced by the PCU, as the location for the GIS database, and the site of a meta-database containing in excess of 1,428 entries.

INDICATOR#2 (Management of the fisheries in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand)

In order to assess the effectiveness of management measures in fisheries in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand, a set of 21 regionally agreed resource and institutional indicators were established. Regional and national plans for the operation of the regional system of fisheries were created for the period 2009-2013, and a GEF project was proposed for funding the revised fisheries component of the SAP.

INDICATOR#3 (Establishment of seagrass monitoring sites)

Eleven permanent seagrass monitoring sites were established near Bolinao; five on Santiago Island and six in coastal barangays on the mainland.

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