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International Outlook for Privately Protected Areas

Country Profile: PHILIPPINES

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Introduction

This country profile is part of a study by the International Land Conservation Network (ILCN) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) summarizing the **legal, policy, and institutional mechanisms used to establish and incentivize privately protected areas (PPAs) in 30 understudied countries.**

PPAs contribute to the achievement of global conservation goals and biodiversity targets by contributing to landscape-scale conservation, connectivity and ecological-representativeness of protected areas.

For the purposes of this profile, an area is considered a PPA if it conforms to the definition agreed upon by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Generally speaking, a PPA's protection must be recognized and durable (with long term conservation intent); it must be governed by a private or non-governmental entity; and it must be governed and managed to meet the general conservation standards of a protected area (PA) as laid out by the IUCN.^{1,2} **Note: Alongside currently existing mechanisms in these countries, this study also references mechanisms that represent *potential opportunities for the creation of PPAs.***

The data in this profile is based on a 2018 desk review of law and policy documents, government reports, publications by multi-lateral organizations, scholarly literature, and other sources. For 28 of the 30 country profiles, data was reviewed by a volunteer in-country expert. We are grateful to these experts, whose names and the profiles they reviewed are listed in the appendix to the [International Outlook for Privately Protected Areas summary report](#).

Finally, this profile is intended to be a living document, which will be updated periodically as more information is submitted and time and resources allow. If you have a contribution, please contact the authors at landconservation@lincolninst.edu.

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¹ Mitchell, B.A., Stolton, S., Bezaury-Creel, J., Bingham, H.C., Cumming, T.L., Dudley, N., Fitzsimons, J.A., Malleret-King, D., Redford, K.H. and Solano, P. (2018). *Guidelines for privately protected areas*. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 29. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. xii + 100pp.

² Dudley, N. (ed.) (2008). *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. x + 86pp. WITH Stolton, S., Shadie, P. and Dudley, N. (2013). *IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidance on Recognising Protected Areas and Assigning Management Categories and Governance Types*, Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 21. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN

PHILIPPINES (*Republic of the Philippines, or Republika ng Pilipinas*)

Outlook for Privately Protected Areas

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1. Gabriel Caballero, Landscape Architect & World Heritage Specialist PALA, SILA-LAAD, MLI, M ICOMOS

I. Country Overview

Land Area

The Philippines is an archipelagic state comprised of about 7,100 islands, with a total land area of about 29,817,000 hectares (ha).³ According to 2014 estimates, some 12,440,000 ha (41.7 per cent of the land area) in the Philippines was under agricultural cultivation. As of 2016, an 15,805,325 ha (53 per cent) was forested.⁴ Of this, 3,270,146 ha are in forest reserves, and 10,056,020 is in established timberlands.

The islands are generally mountainous, with narrow coastal strips and inland valleys. The Philippines is among the 17 countries rated as “megadiverse” by Conservation International, due to the breadth of ecosystem variation and the number of endemic and ecologically-important species.⁵

Land Ownership and Tenure

Land ownership in the Philippines is governed by a complex set of legislative and traditional approaches, the history and intricacies of which will not be covered in this profile.

The country’s total land area of 30 million hectares is legally classified as alienable and disposable land (A&D), forestland, and national parks. As of 2010, forestland made up 14.5 million ha (13.7 million ha of which were classified forest – established timberland, established forest reserve, civil reservations, military reservations, and fishponds – and 0.8 million were unclassified forest land).⁶ 14.2 million ha were classified as certified A&D lands, and 1.3 million ha were classified as national parks. Of the country’s 14.19 million ha of A&D lands, 9.63 million ha are already titled.⁷

According to the 1987 Constitution, “Lands of the public domain are classified into agricultural, forest or timber, mineral lands and national parks.”⁸ Alienable lands in the public domain are limited to agricultural land. *The Commonwealth Act No. 141*, also known as the Public Lands Act, enacted in 1936, is the General

³ USAID. 2011. "Philippines." Accessed September 2018. <https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/philippines/>.

⁴ Republic of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Forest Management Bureau. 2016. Philippine Forestry Statistics. Accessed online September 2016. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1G5mTNoDPOFSTgzVEJicm5OV2s/view>.

⁵ Republic of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. 2016. Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2028: Bringing Resilience to Filipino Communities. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ph/ph-nbsap-v3-en.pdf>.

⁶ Ibid. p. 37.

⁷ Department of Environment and Natural Resources. 2018. “Land Resources.” Accessed November 2018. <https://www.denr.gov.ph/news-and-features/latest-news/55-land-resources.html>.

⁸ Republic of the Philippines. 1987. Constitution of the Philippines. Article 12, section 3. <https://www.thecorpusjuris.com/constitutions/1987-constitution.php>.

Law governing the classification, delimitation, survey and disposition of alienable lands of the public domain.⁹

The 1987 Constitution also identifies that “The State, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and national development policies and programs, shall protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social, and cultural well-being.”¹⁰

The claims of indigenous peoples are further substantiated by the *Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act* of 1997, guaranteeing their rights to ancestral land.¹¹

Per the *1987 Constitution*, only Filipino citizens and companies with majority (60 per cent +) Filipino-ownership are permitted to own land, but foreign individuals and companies are permitted to lease land long term.¹² The lease of land by the Government to any other entity is subject to restrictions on duration and size, as enlaced by the Constitution.¹³

Protected Areas in the Philippines

Article 2, Section 16 of the Philippine Constitution places land protection into the hands of the State – “The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.”¹⁴

At the time of the Philippine’s report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (2014), approximately 4.09 million ha, or 13.57 per cent, of the national territory was protected.¹⁵ (Note: The World Database on Protected Areas shows 4,576,200 ha of land – 15.32 per cent of the Country – protected.¹⁶ Differences between statistics may be due to differences in methodologies or out of date reporting).

The most structurally-significant legislation regarding protected areas in the Philippines is the *National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 (Republic Act No. 7586)*.¹⁷ Section 4 of the Act enumerates the forms of protected areas recognized by the Filipino government. These are *national park, natural monument, natural park, natural biotic area, strict nature reserve, protected landscape/seascape, and wildlife sanctuary*. Each form of government-owned protected area is slightly differentiated, but all constitute strictly protected areas as understood by this study, in that their management is dedicated to primarily to the purpose of nature conservation. This does not inevitably exclude other purposes. For

⁹ Republic of the Philippines. 1936. Commonwealth Act No. 141 - An Act to Amend and Compile the Laws Relative to Lands of the Public Domain. <https://www.scribd.com/document/100772794/Commonwealth-Act-No-141-The-Public-Land-Act-of-1936>.

¹⁰ Republic of the Philippines. 1987. Constitution of the Philippines. Article 12, section 5.

¹¹ Republic of the Philippines. 1997. The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act on 1997 (Republic Act No. 8371). www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ph/ph083en.pdf.

¹² Republic of the Philippines. 1987. Constitution of the Philippines.

¹³ Article 12, Section 3 of the 1987 Constitution stipulates: “Private corporations or associations may not hold such alienable lands of the public domain except by lease, for a period not exceeding twenty-five years, renewable for not more than twenty-five years, and not to exceed one thousand hectares in area. Citizens of the Philippines may lease not more than five hundred hectares, or acquire not more than twelve hectares thereof by purchase, homestead, or grant.”

¹⁴ Republic of the Philippines. 1987. Constitution of the Philippines. State Policies, section 16.

¹⁵ Republic of the Philippines. 2014. The Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity. P. 10. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ph/ph-nr-05-en.pdf>.

¹⁶ UNEP-WCMC. 2018. “Protected Area Profile for Philippines from the World Database of Protected Areas.” Accessed September 2018. <https://www.protectedplanet.net/country/PHL>.

¹⁷ Republic of the Philippines. 1992. National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 (Republic Act No. 7586). www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ph/ph070en.pdf.

example, a *natural biotic area* is protected “to allow the way of life of societies living in harmony with the environment to adapt to modern technology at their pace.”¹⁸

Section 4 of the *NIPAS Act of 1992* also defines *indigenous culture communities* (ICCs) and *tenured migrant communities* (TMCs). The latter are considered those groups living within a protected area boundaries for at least five years before its dedication, and which are dependent on the natural resources of the PA for survival. The definition of ICCs is complex. Reductively, ICCs are understood as groups “who have continuously lived as organized community on communally bounded and defined territory... under claims of ownership since time immemorial, [and are] historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos.”¹⁹ Both types of communities are guaranteed inclusion in protected area management by the Act.

Section 4 of the *NIPAS Act* also defines a *buffer zone* as an area around any protected area, within which the government may regulate to minimize harm to the natural systems within the protected area. Finally, the same section defines a *resource reserve*, wherein all natural systems are fully protected until the government deems it appropriate, by new legislation, for another use, such as to extract resources from the area.

Other protected areas are registered under still other categories, as defined by various other acts. These include *game refuge/bird sanctuary*, *managed resource protected area*, *marine reserve*, *watershed forest reserve*, *wilderness area*, and *critical habitat*. By way of example, *critical habitats* were defined in the 2001 *Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act* (Republic Act 9147).²⁰ Such areas are chosen based on the presence of threatened species (especially endemic ones). *Critical habitats* are, according to the Act, “protected, in coordination with the local government units and other concerned groups, from any form of exploitation or destruction which may be detrimental to the survival of the threatened species dependent therein.”²¹ *Critical habitats* are generally small in area, to support a specific species under threat, but can also be large and serve to protect multiple threatened species (see case study).

The protected area network of the Philippines continues to expand. In 2017, an *Expanded NIPAS Act of 2017 (Senate Bill 1444)* brought 92 new areas under the protection of the original act.²²

In addition to the national protected areas network, the Philippines has internationally recognized protected areas, such as natural World Heritage Sites, Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar Wetlands, and ASEAN Heritage Parks.

Protected Area Management Boards (PAMBs)

Each protected area in the Country is managed by its own protected area management board (PAMB).²³ This system was instituted by the *NIPAS Act of 1992*. Section 11 of that Act stipulates the PAMB must include the following representatives whenever possible:

¹⁸ Republic of the Philippines. 1992. National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 (Republic Act No. 7586). Section 4, part G.

¹⁹ Republic of the Philippines. 1997. The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act on 1997 (Republic Act No. 8371). Section 3h.

²⁰ Republic of the Philippines. 2001. Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. (Republic Act No. 9147). Section 25. <https://www.ecolex.org/details/legislation/wildlife-resources-conservation-and-protection-act-republic-act-no-9147-lex-faac041009/>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Romero, Paolo. 2017. "Senate Approves Bill Expanding Protected Areas. *The Philippine Star*, published May 25, 2017. <http://www.philstar.com/science-and-environment/2017/05/25/1703196/senate-approves-bill-expanding-protected-areas>.

See also, Republic of the Philippines. 2017. Expanded NIPAS Act of 2017 (Senate Bill 1444). <https://www.scribd.com/document/349185887/Expanded-NIPAS-Act-2017>.

²³ La Viña, Antonio G.M., James L. Kho, and Mary Jeand Caleda. 2010. "Legal Framework for Protected Areas: Philippines." IUCN-EPLP No. 81. P. 11. <http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/philippines.pdf>.

- the Regional Executive Director under whose jurisdiction the protected area is located
- one (1) representative from the autonomous regional government (if applicable)
- the Provincial Development Officer
- one (1) representative from the municipal government
- one (1) representative from each barangay [sub-municipal government] covering the protected area
- one (1) representative from each tribal community (if applicable)
- at least three (3) representatives from nongovernment organizations/local community organizations
- one (1) representative from other departments or national government agencies involved in protected area management (if necessary)

Community-based Forest Management

The Philippines are a regional pioneer in participatory forest management, called *Community-based Forestry Management* (CBFM) in current national policy. The current CBFM program in the Philippines was initiated in 1995 by Presidential Executive Order (EO) No. 263.²⁴

The specific policy objectives associated with CBFM in the Philippines are socio-economic development for participating communities, equitable gains from the benefits of forest resources, sustainable forest management, and the protection of a vibrant ecological heritage for Filipinos now and in the future.²⁵ In essence, CBFM pursues a compromise between equity and forest protection. Local constituents, particularly forest-dependent communities, are supported in developing management plans for local forests and in reforestation programs. Agroforestry is used to promote financial advancement for these communities while relieving pressures that, under less favorable circumstances, would prompt deforestation.

A *Community Based Forest Management Agreement* (CBFMA; DENR Administrative Order No. 96-29) is "A production sharing agreement entered into between a community [or People's Organization; PO] and the government to develop, utilize, manage and conserve a specific portion of the forest land, consistent with the principles of sustainable development and pursuant to a Community Resource Management Framework."²⁶ Under a CBFMA, the community, or PO, must establish a Community Forestry Development Fund, through which invest funds (from sales, grants, and other sources) into a range of projects, including forest protection activities, reforestation, and preparation of management plans. As of 2016, 1,884 CBFM Agreements covered 1,615,598 ha.²⁷ Additionally, individuals and families actually

²⁴ Aquino, Albert P. and Carl Rookie O. Daquio. 2014. "CBFM: A National Strategy for Sustainable Forest Management". Accessed May 2018. http://ap.fttc.agnet.org/ap_db.php?id=280&print=1#_ftn1.

See also, President of the Philippines (Fidel V. Ramos). 1995. Executive Order No. 263, Adopting Community-Based Forest Management as the National Strategy to ensure the Sustainable Development of the Country's Forestlands Resources and Providing Mechanisms for its Implementation. www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1995/07/19/executive-order-no-263-s-1995/.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Republic of the Philippines. 1996. DENR Administrative Order No. 96-29, Rules and Regulations for the Implementation of Executive Order 263, Otherwise Known as the Community-Based Forest Management Strategy (CBFMS). http://policy.denr.gov.ph/1996/FOR_DAO_1996-29.pdf.

²⁷ Republic of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Forest Management Bureau, 2016.

occupying or tilling an area within the CBFMA can apply for a *Certificate of Stewardship* with DENR for 25 years, renewable.²⁸

In the context of the definitions for Privately- and Community-managed protected areas put forward by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), CBFMAs are not privately-owned or privately-managed in such a way as to be a PPA. However, in the Filipino context, where the vast majority of landowners are smallholders with limited financial resources, CBFM represents a central opportunity for private citizens to participate in conservation.

II. Law and Policy for Private Land Use

Privately Protected Areas

No formal definition has been supplied for privately protected areas (PPAs) within Philippine Law. This is despite the reference to private reserves in the latest NBSAP (see below). However, private land and private capital both have important existing and potential roles in the national protected area network.

Role of Private Individuals and Organizations in the NIPAS Act of 1992

The *NIPAS Act of 1992*, which forms the foundation upon which much of contemporary Filipino conservation policy is now based, makes no explicit claims about the viability of PPAs. However, a number of references are made to the role of the private sector play in relation to protected areas. Section 9 of the Act, regarding management plans for PAs, requires that plans be supported by “close coordination between and among local agencies of the Government as well as the private sector.”²⁹ This notion is also reflected in the overarching aims of Section 2, recognizing that “...effective administration of these [protected] areas is possible only through cooperation among national government, local government and concerned private organizations...”

Section 10 of the *NIPAS Act* authorizes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) “to enter into contracts and/or agreements with private entities or public agencies as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act” and “to call on any agency or instrumentality of the Government as well as academic institutions, nongovernment organizations and the private sector as may be necessary to accomplish the objectives and activities of the System.”³⁰ Such is the arrangement at the 1,600 ha Masungi Georeserve, a local conservation areas in Rizal where the Blue Star Construction & Development Corporation (BSCDC) holds a joint venture agreement with the DENR to manage over 300 ha of the area (see case study).³¹

Forest Conservation Agreements

In addition to CBFM agreements, there are numerous other agreements related to forests that can be made with DENR. Two that seem to have the potential to be used for forest conservation and restoration are highlighted in this section (others, such as the Private Forest Development Agreement, seem to be purely focused on forestry activities for economic development).

²⁸ Forest Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. n.d. “Certificate of Stewardship.” Accessed September 2018. <http://forestry.denr.gov.ph/index.php/fmb-product-and-services/certificate-of-stewardship>.

²⁹ Republic of the Philippines. 1992. National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 (Republic Act No. 7586). Section 10. www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ph/ph070en.pdf.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ See the Masungi Georeserve website here: <http://www.masungigeoreserve.com/>

An *Integrated Forest Management Agreement* (IFMA; DENR Administrative Order No. 99-53) is a production sharing contract between DENR and an applicant (corporation, partnership, association or cooperative) for a period of 25 years, with the opportunity to renew for an additional 25 years. Under the contract, the IFMA holder has the exclusive right to develop, manage, protect and utilize a specified area of forestland and forest resources therein, as long as they are consistent with the principle of sustainable development and in accordance with an approved Comprehensive Development and Management Plan (CDMP).³² IFMA provisions include reforestation, protection and maintenance, and forest research. The IFMA holder may harvest mature, over-mature, and defective trees.³³ It is unclear how often, if ever, this tool is used for primarily conservation purposes. As of 2016, 127 IFMAs covered over 961,000 hectares.³⁴

The Philippines also has regulations around *Forest Land Use Agreement for Tourism Purposes* (FLAgT), which allows agreement holders to “occupy, develop, utilize, and sustainably manage forestland [in the public domain] for tourism purposes” for 25 years, with an option to renew for another 25 years.³⁵ Filipino citizens or an association, corporation, cooperative, partnership, or juridical person, where at least 60 per cent of the capital is owned by Filipino citizens, can enter into these agreements. As of 2016, 32 FLAgTs covered 306 ha.³⁶

Conservation Easements

The right of a private property owner to place an easement upon their property is substantiated by the *Civil Code of the Philippines*, Book 2, Title 7: Easements or Servitudes.³⁷ An easement requires two landowning parties: a dominant estate and a servient estate. Through the easement contract, the owner of the dominant estate is either granted a specific right of use on all or part of the servient estate (a positive or affirmative easement) or otherwise is granted the ability to limit the uses of the servient estate (a negative easement).³⁸ Section 1, Article 617 indicates that easements run with the estate, i.e. that they remain in force regardless of changes in ownership. To date, easements in the Philippines have not been used by organizations or individuals for conservation purposes.

Just as easements may be contracted voluntarily, between two landholders, easements may also be established by law, at the behest of the government, pursuant to Section 1, Article 619 of the same Title. The Philippines government has identified this as a possible mechanism for biodiversity conservation where the formation of a new protected area might be untimely or unwieldy. For example, when rapid intervention is needed to protect a threatened species or habitat, the state is authorized to produce a *critical habitat* area through “the acquisition of usufruct, establishment of easements or other undertakings appropriate in protecting the critical habitat.”³⁹ The Philippines government has, in situations where private lands and indigenous ancestral domains fall within critical habitats, used eminent

³² Forest Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. n.d. “Integrated Forest Management Agreement.” Accessed September 2018. <http://forestry.denr.gov.ph/index.php/fmb-product-and-services/integrated-forest-management-agreement>.

³³ Forest Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2009. Strengthening Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting on Sustainable Forest Management (MAR-SFM) (GCP/INT/988/JPN): Raising Awareness and Strengthening Capacities on the Application of the Forest Auditing System using the Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (C&I for SFM) in the Philippines. <http://www.fao.org/forestry/24399-0b2dec392ca71d1bac13845ee9ad5a300.pdf>.

³⁴ Republic of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Forest Management Bureau, 2016.

³⁵ Republic of the Philippines, Department of Natural Resources. 2004. Administrative Order No. 2004-28. Rules and Regulations Governing the Use of Forestlands for Tourism Purposes. <https://forestry.denr.gov.ph/images/policies/2004/dao/dao2004-28.pdf>.

³⁶ Republic of the Philippines, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Forest Management Bureau, 2016.

³⁷ Republic of the Philippines. 1949. An Act to Ordain and Institute the Civil Code of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 386). <http://www.thecorpusjuris.com/legislative/republic-acts/ra-no-386.php>.

³⁸ *ibid.* Book 2, Title 7, Section 1, Article 616.

³⁹ Republic of the Philippines. 2001. Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. (Republic Act No. 9147). Article 2, Section 25.

domain to gain control of that land and thereby “make each protected area whole” [or] ensure the ‘contiguity’ of adjacent protected areas.”⁴⁰ However, to the knowledge of this study, easements on private property have not been used to secure land for critical habitats.

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)

The Philippines’ most recent NBSAP (2016), submitted to the Convention on Biological Diversity, does not include an explicit strategy for the incorporation of privately protected areas (PPAs).⁴¹ It does, however, underscore the importance of private sector involvement in biodiversity conservation. Goal 12 of 20 in the report holds that, “by 2028, capacity for biodiversity conservation of public and private sector groups in terrestrial and marine PAs/KBAs [key biodiversity areas] will be strengthened.”⁴²

To this end, the NBSAP recognizes that biodiversity conservation is hindered when land-use planning does not incorporate biodiversity beyond the network of government-managed protected areas. Thus, the document includes the open-ended statement, “Other types of conservation tools include critical habitats, indigenous community-conserved areas (ICCA), local conservation areas (LCA) and private reserves.”⁴³ The study does not, however, elaborate on how such conservation tools might be incorporated.

III. Financial Incentives for Privately Protected Areas

Philippines law does not include any incentive programs for landowners who protect or manage their land for conservation. However, there are some tools that may be used to such ends.

Payment for Ecosystem Services

Since the 1990s, a variety of local, national, and international programs have attempted to institute payment for ecosystem services (PES) programs in the Philippines. Generally in such schemes, a landowner (or other legal steward) of an ecosystem that provides valuable natural services to other individuals receives a payment to incentivize their protection of that ecosystem. Protecting the ecosystem is usually evaluated in terms of alternative land-uses (such as intensive exploitation) that might generate revenue for the landowner. Payments are generally made by those benefitting from the ecosystem services.

In the Philippines, PES programs have emphasized watershed protection services. Deforestation for timber production, settlement, and agriculture tends to reduce the capacity of land to clean and circulate water. The *Energy Act of 1992* and the *Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001* have prompted local governments to arrange the taxation of hydropower companies and to direct raised funds to reforestation projects and infrastructure development in rural communities upstream.⁴⁴ Other PES programs have been operated by NGOs, usually in partnership with local leadership, using both direct and in-kind payments (such as guaranteed stakes in profits from goods harvested from reforested or protected areas).

⁴⁰ La Viña, Kho, and Caleda, 2010.

⁴¹ Republic of the Philippines, Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources, 2016.

⁴² Ibid. p. 108.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 33.

⁴⁴ Cremaschi, Daniel Gaitán, Rodel D. Lasco & Rafaela Jane P. Delfino. 2013. "Payments for Watershed Protection Services: Emerging Lessons from the Philippines." *Journal of Sustainable Development* 6(1). <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/jsd/article/view/19637/15005>.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism, or tourism that centers on ecological and social justice, is an increasingly-popular mode of international travel. Three million tourists visited the Philippines in 2009, and there are 78 designated ecotourism sites across the country.⁴⁵

The Philippines government has identified this as an important economic opportunity for the megadiverse nation. To guide ecotourism initiatives, a *National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan* (NESAP) was put forward for the period 2013-2022.⁴⁶ This document makes several recommendations pertinent to private involvement in land conservation finance. Strategy 2 of the NESAP plan calls on ecotourism to “contribute to financial sustainability of protected areas.” Likewise, strategy 3 identifies eco-tourism as a way to “optimize the economic value of protected areas and other natural areas” in benefitting host communities. The NESAP also contains relevant information for those interested in developing an ecotourism operation in connection to a national park or other government protected area, for instance, by specifying permissible infrastructure design within parks.

IV. Organizations for Private Land Conservation in the Philippines

Government

- The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is responsible for the administration of government protected areas throughout the Philippines, as well as other aspects of environmental policy and regulation.⁴⁷ Within the DENR, protected areas are primarily the responsibility of Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB), formerly called the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB).
- Local district councils and provincial government bodies have proven instrumental in area-based conservation projects, especially when local and indigenous communities participate alongside private companies.
- A National Ecotourism Development Council (NEDC), composed of the secretaries of relevant ministries, was established by *Executive Order (EO) No. 111* in 1999 to coordinate eco-tourism projects in the country, to be implemented locally by as well as Regional Ecotourism Committees.
- A Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) is the core governing body of a given protected area in the Philippines. PAMBs include representatives from local government units and other government agencies, as well as representatives from civil society organizations, academic institutions, and local and indigenous communities with a stake that PA.

Non-governmental

- Since 1972, the Haribon Foundation has supported community action to conserve habitats, species, and natural systems in the Philippines, with an emphasis on sustainable forestry and reforestation.⁴⁸
- Conservation International (CI) is an international NGO with multiple programs active in the Philippines, including the Quirino Forest Carbon Partnership Project – a payments for

⁴⁵ Republic of the Philippines, Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources, 2016. P. 28-29.

⁴⁶ Republic of the Philippines. 2014. National Ecotourism Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2022. <http://www.bmb.gov.ph/downloads/Presentations/NES%20and%20DAO%202009-09.pdf>.

⁴⁷ See their website: <http://denr.gov.ph/>.

⁴⁸ See their website: <https://goharibon.wordpress.com/>.

- ecosystem services project that funds reforestation by farmers on the periphery of the Quirino Protected Landscape.⁴⁹
- The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) is a multilateral partnership of six countries, including the Philippines, working together to sustain extraordinary marine and coastal resources by addressing crucial issues such as food security, climate change and marine biodiversity.⁵⁰
 - NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas (NIPA) Inc. is a “consortium of Philippine nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) bonded together by a common vision of establishing protected areas that are sustainably managed by local communities in collaboration with government.”⁵¹ NIPA works closely with DENR on the Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project, providing technical assistance with protected area management plans, ecologically-sound enterprise, and environmental policy research.
 - Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation (PBCF) supports the long-term conservation of endemic wildlife and natural habitats through several regionally-organized projects.⁵²
 - The World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF) has been active in the Philippines since 1993. ICRAF prioritizes working with farmers to establish stable forest-based industries, sponsoring programs for reforestation, sustainable non-timber forest products, and protection of watershed services.⁵³
 - The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has been operating in the Philippines since 1997 to address climate change, provide sustainable livelihoods, and conserve terrestrial and marine resources. They have been involved in a range of projects, including at the SM Prime Holdings’ Hamilo Coast development, where they provide technical expertise to the project.⁵⁴
 - Rainforest Trust is an internationally-operating NGO with a focus on the creation of new protected areas and the establishment of effective long-term stewardship through a balance between stable external funding and local stakeholder involvement. The Trust is engaged in at least four projects in the Philippines.⁵⁵
 - The Centre for Sustainability PH is a recently-formed conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the protection of natural resources on the island of Palawan and is a key partner for Rainforest Trust (see case study).⁵⁶

V. Case Studies

*Masungi Georeserve*⁵⁷

Today, the 1,600 ha Masungi Georeserve is a local conservation area in Rizal that protects unique, ancient limestone formations and numerous endemic and endangered species; however, in the 1990s, the area was threatened by illegal loggers and mining activities.

⁴⁹ See their website: <http://www.conservation.org/global/philippines/Pages/default.aspx>.

⁵⁰ See their website: <http://www.coraltriangleinitiative.org/>.

⁵¹ See their website: <http://www.philippinesypages.com.ph/organisations/996/ngos-for-integrated-protected-areas-inc>.

See also, Senga, Rafael G. 2001. "Establishing Protected Areas in the Philippines: Emerging Trends, Challenges and Prospects". *The George Wright Forum* 18(2). Pp. 58. <http://www.georgewright.org/182senga.pdf>.

⁵² See their website: <http://pbcfi.org.ph/>.

⁵³ See their website: <http://www.worldagroforestry.org/country/philippines>.

⁵⁴ See their website: <https://wwf.org.ph/> and <http://www.hamilocoast.com/>.

⁵⁵ See their website: <https://www.rainforesttrust.org/>.

⁵⁶ See their website: <http://www.centreforsustainability.org/>.

⁵⁷ See their website: <http://www.masungigeoreserve.com/>.

In the 2000s, the Blue Star Construction & Development Corporation (BSCDC) entered into a joint venture agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to manage over 300 ha of the area, along the spine of the rock formation. In partnership with the local communities of Pinugay, Baras, Cuyambay, and Tandang Kutyo, BSCDC has led a restoration effort. In 2015, BSCDC opened the site to ecotourism, combining environmental preservation, community involvement, and sustainable tourism together with the local communities.

*Secret Paradise Resort & Turtle Sanctuary*⁵⁸

Secret Paradise Resort & Turtle Sanctuary is a private eco-tourism resort on the island of Palawan in the western Philippines. Covering 118 acres and including five kilometers of coastline and two bays, the resort caters to tourists interested in experiencing natural beauty. As an important place for the endangered Green Sea Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), the for-profit enterprise has a mission of “protecting endangered sea turtles and our surrounding large nature reserve.”

The Secret Paradise Resort & Turtle Sanctuary has protected a 28-ha cove for 12 years through a permit with the local municipality, San Vicente. This has allowed the Sanctuary to protect the bay from illegal fishing and restrict beach access during turtle nesting season. Secret Paradise Resort & Turtle Sanctuary is an accredited Turtle Sanctuary by the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development and is a partner of WWF-Philippines.

⁵⁸ See their website: <http://secretparadiseresortandturtlesanctuary.com/>.