

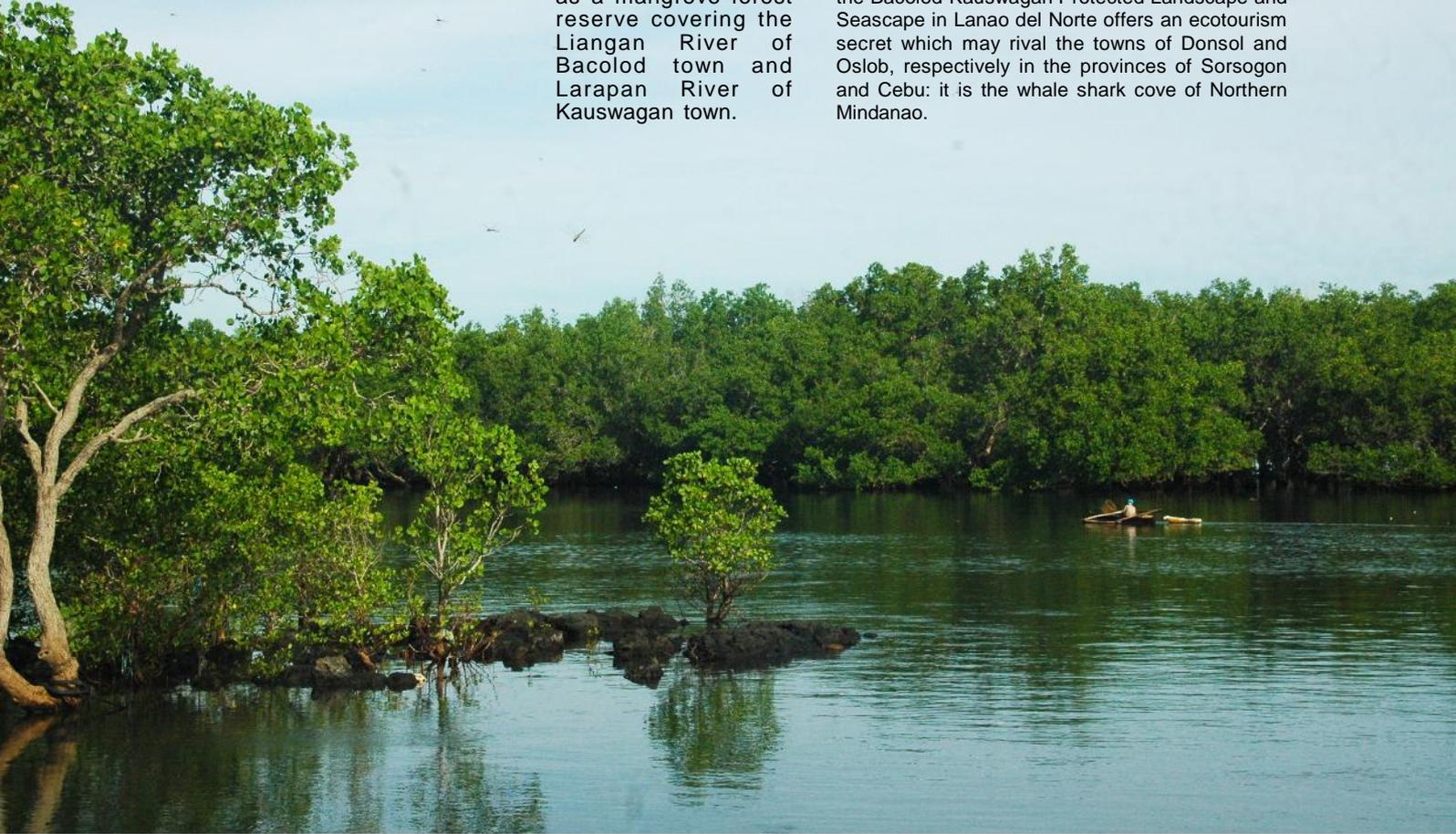


Bacolod-Kauswagan Protected Landscape and Seascape

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Biodiversity Management Bureau

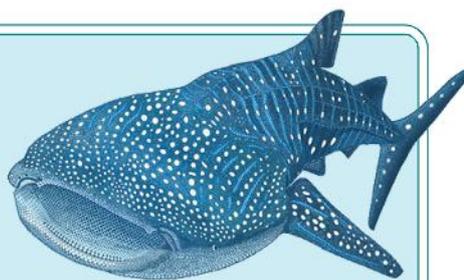
It used to be classified as a mangrove forest reserve covering the Liangan River of Bacolod town and Larapan River of Kauswagan town.

Aside from wide mangroves and coral beds, the Bacolod-Kauswagan Protected Landscape and Seascape in Lanao del Norte offers an ecotourism secret which may rival the towns of Donsol and Oslob, respectively in the provinces of Sorsogon and Cebu: it is the whale shark cove of Northern Mindanao.



Biodiversity Significance

BKPLS was identified because of the presence of mangroves and coral beds. The species of mangroves identified inside the protected area are dominated by *Sonneratia alba* with associated species of *Tui*, *Pia-api* and *Rhizophora spp*. *Xylocarpus granatum*, *Ceriops tagal*, *Ceriops decandara*, *Brugiera cylindrica*, *Buta-buta*, *Diliwariu*, *Saging-saging*, and *Tinduk-tindukan*. Along the boundary between the highest high tide and landward zone, *Terminalia catappa*, *Vitex parviflora*, and *Pterocarpus indicus* can be seen in most parts of Bacolod.



The coral bed is dominated with branching acroporan corals, acroporan tabulate coral colony, *acropora palifera*, and other species of corals which are conserved and protected in the MPA. There are recorded sightings of dolphins and green sea turtles locally known as *pawikan* inside the protected area. Sightings of the *butanding* (whale shark) near the village of Binuni was also documented and scooped to national television network GMA7.

Economic Significance

Fishes are abundant in BKPLS such as *Siganus guttatus*, *Sargocentron rubrum*, *Amphiprion melanoppus*, and other reef fishes identified to be local in the area. Given the coastal ecosystem characteristic of BKPLS, the area is able to sustain 2,000 fisherfolks dependent on gleaning and fishing as primary source of food and income.

Mangroves serve as natural wave breaker for disaster risk reduction given that the urban and urbanizing barangays of the two municipalities are located at the coasts. Mangroves prevent erosion which helps coral biodiversity, and also produce nutrients for the fish. They complement the presence of seagrasses which binds sediments and serves as a nursery and a feeding and spawning area for fishes.



Emerging Good Practices: Governance

The act of institutionalizing the Integrated Coastal Management Plans (ICMP) of the covered municipalities has sparked the partnership of BKPLS and the LGUs. Priority programs, projects, and activities identified in the ICMP are incorporated in the Annual Investment Program of the municipalities particularly for LDRRM fund and the Local Development Fund.

With the setting up of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan incorporated in responsible governance, a Biodiversity Management Board was created through an Executive Order for Bacolod, where the residing PaSu serves as a member with a voting capacity for the prevention and mitigation component of the DRR and management programs of the municipality.

And with BMS prioritized, primarily in the monitoring and evaluation of marine biodiversity and ecosystem, biodiversity management enforcers have been hired. A budget has been allocated to support biodiversity management within the financial capacity of the LGU.

Engagement with Local Communities and Stakeholder Partnerships

In capturing the essence of partnership, a joint venture with fisherfolks, women, emergency responders, and the academe has been established.

Community education and public awareness activities are regularly conducted for students, teaching them the value of BKPLS and its biodiversity. Student participation is highly recommended during programs and activities relative to celebrations prioritizing the environment.

Researches were conducted inside the BKPLS particularly from the MSU-IIT. The presence of the La Salle University-Ozamis City Research Extension office in Binuni, Bacolod has made the biodiversity of the PA more significant to the students, who are also considered as local tourists.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has conducted livelihood programs which includes mangrove planting. The introduction of "aquasilviculture" has supported the PA's goal in enhancing the biodiversity of the area. The municipalities of Bacolod and Kauswagan have partnered with the preservation and conservation of the BKPLS, looking forward to achieving the incentives of ecotourism such as boardwalks inside the mangrove forest.

Partnerships with POs, CSOs, and NGOs such as the Bacolod Movers, Tagolinao Fisherfolks, and Manginhasay Womens Association have been established to prioritize responsible development and environmental conservation.

Policy Support and Law Enforcement

In partnership with the LGUs, the Emergency Response Team and deputized Biodiversity Management Enforcers are partners in the cause of law enforcement.

For policy support in the legislation of effective laws and ordinances covering BKPLS, the local Sanggunian endorses most of the resolutions that the PAMB forwards, recommends, and approves especially in the use and management of the mangrove forest and coral habitats.

Innovation

With the creation of the municipal Biodiversity Management Board headed by the mayor of Bacolod and in partnership with the PAMB of BKPLS, a three-day fishing ban is imposed starting two days after the appearance of the new moon.

This method has been proposed as a solution to climate change adaptation and restoring fishery resources after the conduct of Biodiversity Management Summit Fisher Folks Forum.

BD Conservation: Biophysical Impacts

With the conduct of a participatory coastal resource assessment, it was learned that an average 38% of live corals are found within the PA. The survival of the mangroves planted is closely monitored as they are important factors to the area's biodiversity.

With the three-day fishing ban period in place and the strengthening of the ICM implementation, a healthier biodiversity in BKPLS is expected. A vulnerability assessment is scheduled in late 2014, with the existing condition of the coral bed to be identified. Measures for improving its status such as coral reef restoration will continually be implemented.