

Tapaz: livelihood for former insurgents

By **ET Aldon**

The absence of seawater and large water bodies in central Panay is not a letdown for Mayor Romualdo Exmundo of Tapaz, Capiz. Mayor Exmundo initiated the SEAFDEC/AQD-CPEU-BFAR project where AQD provides technical assistance in the culture of tilapia in netcages in San Julian dam. CPEU is Central Panay Economic Union, Inc., a consortium of town mayors.



Mayor Romualdo Exmundo of Tapaz has found a livelihood for rebel returnees

Central Panay had been very much isolated for lack of good roads, and the insurgency in the '80s has found a fertile ground because of poverty in the area. The

positive outlook of the present progressive mayor, however, has encouraged the rebels to come down from the hills. Mayor Exmundo facilitated the allotment of a portion of San Julian dam for the ex-rebels to put up their own tilapia cages. Tapaz, after 8 months, is now enjoying bountiful harvests of tilapia. At the same time, the LGU is maintaining tilapia breeders to supply their fry requirement. The mayor stressed that the project has brought social and economic benefits to Tapaz. AQD did not only open avenues for economic development, the Mayor said, but had taught them environmental protection and conservation.

He exhorts his constituents to protect the river banks by protecting the trees that grow along it. "I will make San Julian dam our best bet for the national government's 'Clean and green' award next year. We only got 3rd in the regional level this year." ###

WHAT'S IN --

the island of bohol



Bohol belongs to Region 7, and has 47 towns including 29 coastal municipalities. The island has rolling and hilly terrain, and about 161 km of coastline characterized by woodlands, grass and areas of dense swamplands. It has 3,407 ha of fishponds.

In terms of local government and community involvement in CRM, some rehabilitation efforts for mangroves have been initiated as early as 1964. Another reforestation project by students and officials in Calape in 1968 planted a 20 m band along 4.8 km of coast for protection against wind and storms.

From 1984 to 1992, Banacon Island (still within Bohol's jurisdiction) was made a model for the community-based mangrove reforestation component of a World Bank project. Today, it has 400 ha of *bakauan bata* or spider mangrove (*Rhizophora styloza*) plantation, half of which was planted by the community. East of Banacon is another island, Calituban, with 300 ha of young mangroves. To the west are the islets of Juguliao and Nasingin which are also surrounded with mangroves.

One of Bohol's municipalities, Pitogo (also known as President Carlos P. Garcia), has been cited as the best in coastal management by the League of Municipalities of the Philippines and DENR's Coastal Resource Management Project. *From the Philippine Regional Profiles*

Tubigon: CRM in progress

By **NJ Dagoon**

Mayor Paulo Lasco of Tubigon, Bohol recently collaborated with SEAFDEC/AQD, BFAR and four other non-government organizations on a training course on marine cage farming. The course was sponsored by LandBank.

Mayor Lasco considers himself a "new" mayor, having been elected only last year. Below he shares his views on LGUs, coastal resources management (CRM) and aquaculture.

Does Tubigon have an existing CRM policy?

We are following the previous administration's policy which is open fishing. Anyone can fish in our waters, just as long as he abides by our laws and ordinances. If

one trespasses, he'll be doing a lot of explaining in our court.

Our fishing areas are zoned. For instance, two island barangays, Makabong and Bagong Banwa, are designated as *payao* zones. All the fishers in these island villages use only *payao*, and only fish that go near the *payao* can be harvested.

The area in Batasan has been declared a sanctuary. This consists of an 80 ha mangrove plantation, and is part of the Haribon—DENR—Feed the Children project. Three other islets have been declared as part of NIPAS, the National Integrated Protected Area Systems. We help the DENR protect the area. But since the Tubigon fishing ground is not very wide, resident fishers of 12 coastal barangays are

allowed to fish near these islets to avoid conflict.

We are still in the "initial" stage of marine sanctuaries. We do have a fish sanctuary but not in the strictest sense of the word. The fish sanctuary I mean is artificial reefs which are cement-casted, and then dropped to the sea floor. It's a fish sanctuary in the sense that it is a protected zone.

What are other CRM policy measures do you have?

Another kind of help we extend is the regulation of commercial fishing. During nights and under the cover of darkness, big commercial fishing vessels sometimes trespass on our territorial jurisdiction. Our deputy wardens, fish wardens and the *Bantay Dagat* patrol are posted to catch these offenders.

We have a program that gives non-cash assistance to small-scale fishers. We give equipment, like a Briggs & Stratton 5-10 hp engine and fishing materials for gill net or pamu fishing. Just the other week we gave around P46,000 worth of fishing paraphernalia.

How many fishers or villagers have availed of these gifts?

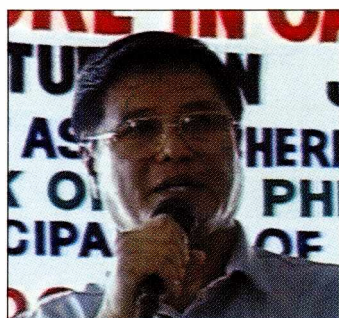
Since I arrived July of last year, there have been five barangays extended assistance.

How do you determine the deserving ones of aid?

Well, we first screen them by conducting a background investigation. We determine who those marginalized fishers are, the poorest among the poor, with the help of the barangay officials and NGOs.

How does the local government help in CRM and aquaculture, with regards to technical access?

The same way as what we're doing now. We invite AQD and collaborate with some of the other agencies concerned, like for



Tubigon Mayor Paulo Lasco

Members of various fishers' cooperative construct a netcage in Maberres, Tubigon. In the background is one of the three NIPAS sites where mariculture projects (including grouper culture) are to be pursued



instance, Land Bank, the LOGODEF (the Local Government Development Foundation) and non-government organizations like Haribon Foundation and Feed the Children. We collaborate with them with respect to providing technical and transmitting technical know-how or expertise to aquaculture growers.

Do you have a support structure for marketing? access to sources of fry?

None as of now, because we have not conducted any marketing studies. For fry, we are now studying the sources. That's why we called on AQD to share ideas on how to go about this. Right now, the fry we use come from the wild and are bought from the town's fry gatherers. Hopefully, the transfer of expertise from AQD will enable us to propagate our own fry.

Have you visited our hatchery facilities at AQD? How did you find them? Do you plan to get fry from AQD and transport them to Bohol?

Yes, I have, but I don't know how we can

replicate them with the huge amount involved in their construction. I hope that with the help of our funding sources—the European Union and the LOGODEF—we can build our own hatchery in stages.

In the meantime, we can make arrangements with AQD about getting fry. Mr. Renato Agbayani (Head of AQD's Training and Information Division) has already signified his intention to support us in this aspect.

What support does the LGU give in terms of feed?

Grouper culture in our community depends on trash fish. Right now, they buy this from neighboring towns and the municipality itself. Should the industry expand further, the trashfish supply could be

depleted. In that event, our local buyers will have to go to Cebu to buy trashfish.

In what way then will the LGU help the growers have access to these sources?

We will contact suppliers and we will provide information and technical assistance. We will tap expertise and knowledge from AQD and transmit them to the growers.

Do you have long-term programs to ensure that the town's coastal resources are sustainably developed?

We have a strong law enforcement campaign. We will expand our *Bantay Dagat* or seaboard patrol teams. As of now, we have two teams and another three supported by an NGO.

We are very dedicated and sincere in this aspect because no matter how good our programs will be, we will always fail if law enforcement is poor. So in line with our support for or commitment to CRM's success—we must also strictly enforce and uphold the municipal ordinances and laws.

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What other non-government organizations are you involved with?

Besides Feed the Children, Haribon and LOGODEF, Greenpeace is now associated with us. The LOGODEF mainly funds our CRM and mariculture project. It is based in Manila and is the front organization in the Philippines for the Conrad Adenauer Stiftung Kas in Germany. Conrad Adenauer was the first prime minister of the West German Republic. To perpetuate his memory, the Germans established in his honor the foundation whose purpose is to build up strong democracies in Third World countries.

What is your relationship with NGOs, fisherfolk associations, government and private agencies? How do you relate to them?

I would say we have an excellent, cordial relationship with the NGOs and the private sector. We have already established rapport. Hopefully, we can sustain this in the future.

What are some of your long-range plans?

We plan to revise our zonification scheme. We need to update because claimants have increased in number. There are various claimants of our fishing grounds. This has created conflict among them and the only way to resolve this conflict is to zonify anew the fishing ground

Please enumerate the factors that ensure success of the CRM program in your municipality.

First is strong relationship/collaboration between the LGU and the NGOs. We can't ensure the success of CRM without the help of non-government organizations.

The second factor is honest-to-goodness and dedicated law enforcement. Even if we have sea patrol vessels, if the *Bantay Dagat* crew are not honest and are corrupt—these will not ensure the success of the program. ###

WHAT'S IN -- western samar



Western Samar, belonging to Region 8, sits on the third largest island in the country. It is hilly with some mountains and narrow strip of lands.

Its major industries are agriculture, mining, jellyfish processing, logging, and cottage industries. It also has 3,412 ha of fishponds. Its major products include coconut, rice, corn, abaca, woodcraft, shellcraft, and basket-weaving.

Western Samar has 25 municipalities populated by over half a million people. Its workforce are mostly in the agriculture sector. Like the rest of the country, the people are highly literate (85%). -- From the *Philippine Regional Profiles*

SEAFDEC/AQD and WESAMAR join efforts to establish a multi-species hatchery

By **MB Surtida**

On-farm-research (OFR) is the Western Samar Agricultural Development Programme's (WESAMAR) word for new livelihood projects conducted by men and women who are members of a community organization.

WESAMAR is a special project of the Department of Agriculture and the European Union. It aims to improve the income and livelihood of resource poor fishing and farming communities of Western Samar by assisting them in establishing sustainable and commercially viable enterprises. Some of the projects in a coastal community in Western Samar is mudcrab fattening, grouper cage culture, pearl, mussel and seaweed culture, and tilapia dispersal. Most projects have now had production success and have generated interest in neighboring barangays. Added to this, the project area has mangroves, pro-

ductive shallow bays, and numerous islands with extensive coves, making the area potentially rich as a major aquaculture site.

Some community organizations under WESAMAR are now ready to start similar projects with funding access, thus, it is foreseen that aquaculture will be a major development in the area. But growing concerns for availability of crab juveniles and grouper fingerlings have been articulated as these are scarce in the area. At present, the wild source can supply the needs of the project but a multi-species hatchery has to be established to minimize depletion of natural stocks. The community members do not have prior experience in hatchery operation, thus, SEAFDEC/AQD was invited to a collaborative project with WESAMAR to provide technical assistance until such project can be operated by