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Scaling Innovative, Community-Based Coastal Biodiversity Protection Projects in Indonesia, Philippines and the Pacific

Healthy fisheries and coastal habitats provide coastal communities a multitude of goods and services such as food, recreation, coastal resilience, resistance to climate stressors and adaptability to changing conditions. However, marine and coastal biodiversity are currently under severe threat from human pressures and the effects of climate change, especially in Asia Pacific's Coral Triangle, a global hotspot of marine biodiversity.

In 2014, Rare, with the support of the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety

(BMUB), launched a project designed to scale innovative, community-based conservation of coastal and nearshore marine biodiversity in the Philippines, Indonesia, and the Pacific.

Rare specializes in sourcing community-based conservation solutions and building the capacity and support necessary for adopting and replicating those solutions. Rare's signature Pride campaigns mobilize communities and build local capacity to implement solutions that help people and nature thrive. Pride campaigns employ proven marketing techniques to move the hearts and minds of local communities, accelerating the adoption of new approaches and ensuring the change endures.

The Solution: A Combination of Marine Protected Areas and Exclusive Access Privileges

Rare's solution is relatively simple – empower local coastal communities to unleash the potential of comprehensive, locally-managed marine protected areas (MPAs).



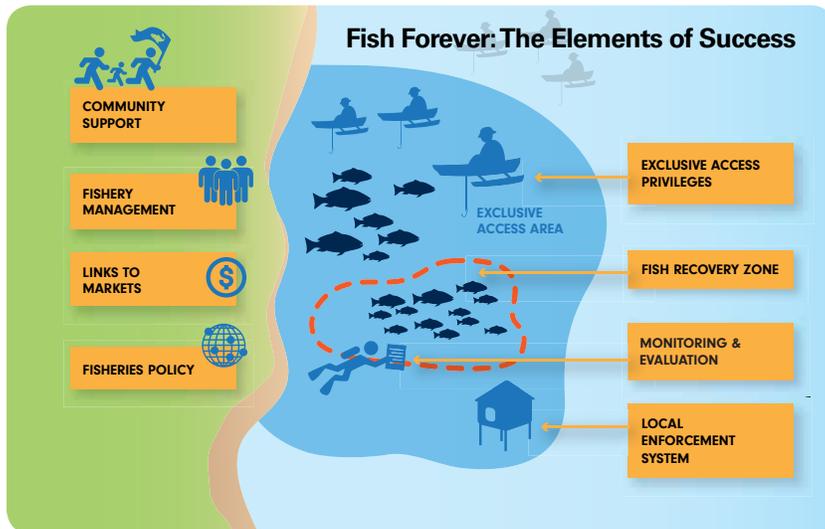
This incorporates:

- Exclusive access privileges to local fishers
- Fish Recovery Zones or No Take Zones (NTZs) where fish can grow and reproduce unharmed and spill over into surrounding areas
- Protection of critical ecosystems, including coral reefs, mangroves and sea-grass beds
- Improvement of local communities' capacity for monitoring and managing MPAs

Benefits of well-managed marine reserves go directly to the local community, creating strong incentives for enforcement and compliance with no-take restrictions. Increased community capacity to guard and manage their fishery helps ensure that fishers reap the rewards of being responsible guardians of the sea, sustain their efforts over the long term and instill a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

The integrity, resilience and productivity of high-value coastal and near-shore marine biodiversity is sustained or recovering at 27 high-priority sites in the Philippines, Indonesia and the Pacific, through a combination of human community capacity building and behavior change, MPA/NTZ protection and rights-based fisheries management. A foundation is laid for systemic change based upon the successes and lessons of the project.

Catalyzing a Global Movement for Marine and Coastal Biodiversity – “Fish Forever”



The combination of fisher empowerment, capacity building and community mobilization that make up the full suite of solutions at each project site will help ensure that coastal fisheries are ecologically and economically sustainable for generations to come, building the momentum for wide-scale adoption across the globe. Rare, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the Sustainable Fisheries Group at University of California, Santa Barbara launched a partnership called **Fish Forever** that is dedicated to spreading this approach globally. The IKI-supported project to scale community-based conservation in Indonesia and Philippines falls under the Fish Forever umbrella.

Contributions to the Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Rare is committed to supporting countries with the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and each of the five countries’ National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan through its work at the local, regional and global levels. This initiative makes headway towards protection, recovery, and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity by addressing the incentives and behaviors of local communities to safeguard their marine and coastal resources. Rare and its partners will work with communities to ensure that MPAs will be ecologically representative, well-connected, and effectively and equitably managed.

Indonesia

Since 2010, Rare has worked with 20 coastal regions in Indonesia to establish and strengthen fish recovery zones. Rare’s first 10 projects facilitated the final design and successful designation of 34 fish recovery zones covering a combined total area of 52,139 hectares.

Philippines

Since 2009, Rare has partnered with 26 coastal municipalities to increase effectiveness. Across Rare’s first 12 projects in the Philippines, the abundance of coastal fish species increased by an average of 47 percent within fish recovery zones in two years.

Pacific

This project builds on Rare’s program for Island Resilience in the Pacific and also draws on rainwater and watershed management and erosion control best practices to address the threat of sedimentation.

About the International Climate Initiative

Since 2008, the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) has been financing climate and biodiversity projects in developing and newly industrializing countries, as well as in countries in transition.

Additional Partnerships:

Rare has developed this project in close cooperation with the Ministry of Forestry and Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries in Indonesia, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Philippines, and with the government of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of Marshall Islands. Other partners include the Micronesia Conservation Trust and the Philippines Marine and Environment Resources Foundation.



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Rare inspires change so that people and nature thrive. Visit Rare on the web at rare.org.