



Investigating the Effects of a Seasonal Closure of the Visayan Sea Small Pelagics Fishery: Ecological and Policy Implications

Aims of the project

The principal objective of this PhD project is to apply a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to evaluating the potential impacts of a seasonal closure on the small pelagics fishery in the Visayan Sea, Philippines. Specifically, it aims to determine the effects of the closure on the abundance of the small pelagic stocks and its corresponding impacts to the rest of the multi-gear, multi-species fishery.

In collaboration with the Visayan Sea Scientific Advisory Group (SAG), the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the National Stock Assessment Program (NSAP) of Regions 5, 6 and 7, this project also aims to explore alternative scenarios of the seasonal fishery closure that can potentially result in the most significant impacts either biologically and/or economically over time in order to inform future policy implementation.

First results

Presently, the project is in the early stages of consolidating relevant historical and time-series data on the fisheries and important biological stocks from various fisheries-independent studies and fisheries-dependent surveys that had been conducted in the Visayan Sea. These will serve as critical inputs to the development of a historical (baseline) trophic model of the Visayan Sea. We have likewise collaborated with the Visayan Sea SAG representatives in setting the research agenda for the Visayan Sea and in developing the initial ecosystem-scale research and policy-related questions that we ultimately intend to explore using the trophic model.

KEY FACTS

ZMT contacts: Regina Therese M. Bacalso, PhD Candidate and Matthias Wolff, WG Resource Management

Cooperation partners: FishRight Project of the Coastal Resources Center, University of Rhode Island (CRC-URI)

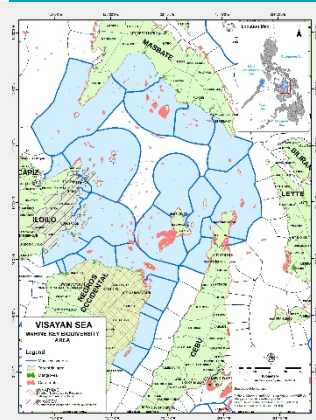
Partner countries: Philippines

Research Locations: Visayan Sea, Philippines

Project duration: April 2018 – September 2022

Funding: the FishRight Project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID); Ms. Bacalso is pursuing her PhD studies in Germany under a KAAD Scholarship

Status: the PhD project is conducted in cooperation with the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Regions 5, 6 and 7, Philippines



The Visayan Sea is a vast inland sea that is centrally located in the Philippine archipelago between 11°N and 12°N latitudes and 123°E and 124°E longitudes, covering an approximate area of 10,000 km². It is bordered by 4 distinct provinces with 33 component coastal municipalities all together.