

Inter-Local Collaboration: A New Approach Toward the Implementation of the Integrated Coastal management (ICM) Program of Batangas, Philippines

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Abstract

Today, Batangas is one of the only provinces in the Philippines, who have implemented the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) program successfully alongside with Bataan and Guimaras. It is a mechanism to increase the efficiency of coastal governance in terms of its ability to achieve sustainable use of coastal resources. The Local Government Code of the Philippines encourages cooperative mechanisms and partnerships among stakeholders at the local level. Furthermore, different sectors and stakeholders, from international, national, and local levels, have contributed to the implementation of the program. The Local Government Units (LGUs) of Batangas are among the key actors in the implementation of the program. Using the Model of Collaborative Governance (Ansell & Gash, 2007), and Common Pool Resource Theory (Ostrom, 1990), this paper reveals that the inter-local collaboration of Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province as regards the successful implementation of the ICM program in their province is effective based on the Critical Ingredients for Effective Inter-Local Government Unit (LGU) Cooperation, which was formulated by the Philippine Development Forum Working Group on Decentralization and Local Government's Sub-Working Group on Inter-Local Cooperation. A qualitative approach was used in this research, through the descriptive method following an evaluative design. As such, this research caters contributions to the field of political science, both theoretically and practically by applying the aforementioned theories, and by exemplifying the interactions of the LGUs of Batangas in fulfilling the goals of the ICM program as a successful model which could be adopted by other LGUs in the country.

Key Words:

Batangas Province in the Philippines, Coastal Region, Inter-local Collaboration, Intergrated Coastal Management Program, Local Government.

Introduction

With its thousands of islands, the Philippines has an estimated 36,289 kilometers length of coastline, and is considered to be one of the longest coastlines in the world. The Philippine coastline extends to 2,000 kilometers from north to south of the country, and its 25 major cities are situated on the coast. Further, according to the statistics of The World Bank Group in 2005⁹¹, more than 60 percent of the total population of the Philippines, about 87.8 million people, resides in the coastal zone. Additionally, the Philippine coastal system is renowned as the world's center for tropical marine biodiversity, characterized by extensive coral reefs, sea grass beds and mangroves, with abundant fisheries and marine life (PEMSEA, 2006: 1). The aforementioned data regarding the coastal systems of the Philippines assert that there is a great need for the country to adopt and implement an Integrated Coastal Management to secure a more comprehensive way of governance toward attaining the sustainable development of the coastal regions in the country.

Coastal systems are considered to be complex and an extraordinary environment. It consists of a handful of benefits to offer such as its rich natural resources which are being utilized as mediums for different communities and local governments to lead themselves toward development. Thus, coastal areas are venues where major human settlements and activities take place (Haslett, 2009: 1). In a study conducted by Saguin (2008), the Philippine coasts today are experiencing massive ecological and economic transformations. With the factors of mega-development, excessive harvesting of resources, terribly increasing occurrences of disasters, and climate change, the coasts are being affected directly, and communities situated therein suffer severe economic and ecological damages including the loss of lives, property, imbalances in biodiversity, and serious depletion and degradation of marine resources.

With the effects of the abovementioned factors to the coastal areas, a framework known as the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Program has been introduced by an international organization—Partnerships in the Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)—in order to attain sustainable development for the coasts, and to address the pressing problems of various environmental hazards affecting them. ICM

⁹¹ The Philippines Environment Monitor 2005

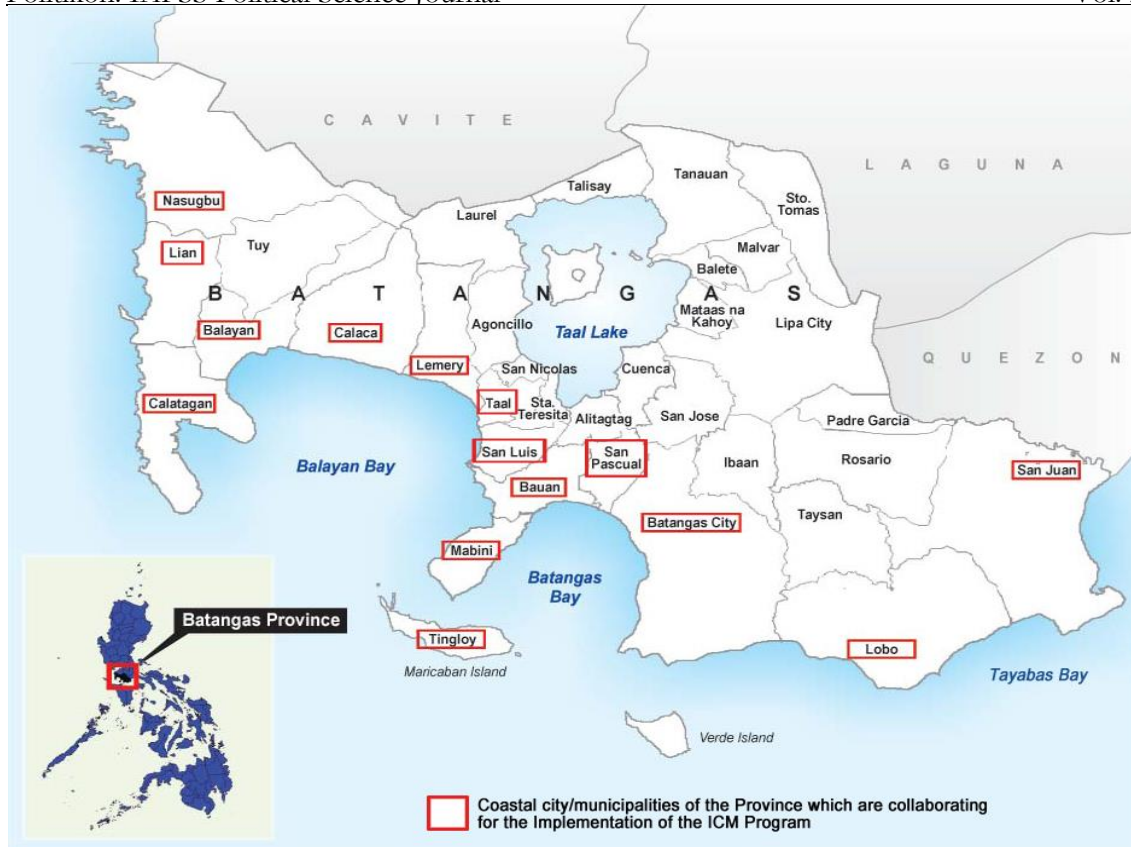
Program was first introduced in the Philippines in the province of Batangas⁹², which is considered as one of the emerging sites for development in the country. In the words of Chua (as cited in Provincial Government-Batangas, Philippines and PEMSEA, 2008: 1), ICM is a natural resource and environmental management framework which employs an integrative, holistic approach, and an interactive planning process in addressing the complex management issues in the coastal areas, and also allows economic development to proceed at the same time.

As a management framework, the ultimate purpose of the ICM program is to increase the efficiency of coastal governance of the focus coastal areas. Batangas, being the experimental site in the Philippines for the implementation of the framework, has expressed its huge interest to apply the framework of the ICM program to their province in order to establish a systematic governance for the sustainable development of their marine and coastal areas. Consequently, it is also important to take in consideration the institutionalization of the framework to the provincial government structure of Batangas. The province of Batangas is a very good locale for this research as it possesses several potentials and opportunities which can be utilized to further the development of the province. Among these are the potential of the Batangas bay to be developed as an international port in the country. In addition to this, the existence of the breath-taking beaches and diving sites can supplement to the totality of the performance of the tourism industry of the country. Moreover, the abundant marine and aquaculture present in the coastal areas are also considered as assets of the province.

The Coastal Communities of Batangas Province

The 3,166 km² land area of the Batangas province is home to 34 cities and municipalities in which 14 are coastal municipalities, and one is a coastal city. In addition, it consists of three major bays—Batangas Bay, Balayan Bay and adjacent bays, and Tayabas Bay and adjacent bays—which carry 492 km total length of coastline. In implementing the ICM program, besides the goal to establish a system of governance for the management of their marine and coastal resources, Batangas aims to develop their coastal areas into international ports which can serve as an alternative to the major ports of the country (i.e. Manila Bay).

⁹² Batangas province is located at the Southern Tagalog region (Luzon Island) of the country, bordered by provinces of Cavite, Laguna, and Quezon.



Source: Provincial Government-Batangas, Philippines & PEMSEA, 2008

Figure 1: Map of Batangas Province, with emphasis on the 14 coastal municipalities and 1 coastal city which collaborate for the implementation of the ICM Program

Since most coastal areas are contiguous, it is essential to have a binding mechanism for each municipality/city to employ within their borders. Say, the Municipality of Calatagan implements an ordinance institutionalizing the Coastal Clean Up and Zoning of Marine Protected Areas⁹³ as regards the cleanliness and development of their respective coastal area, however, the Municipality of Balayan focuses on establishing major industries in their locale situated near the Balayan Bay which causes pollution to the marine environment. Thus, these pollutants can soon affect the farther regions of the bay because neighboring municipalities are not concerned with the development and maintenance of their respective areas, as well as to the existing policies which their neighbors are implementing as regards to it. In this circumstance, there is in fact a need for the harmonization of the policies that must be implemented in contiguous areas along the bay region.

⁹³ Municipality of Calatagan, Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office, Institutionalization of Coastal Clean Up and Zoning of Marine Protected Areas.

Inter-Local Collaboration

Inter-local collaboration, on the one hand, encourages cooperative mechanisms and partnerships among stakeholders at the local level. Such collaborative efforts came into existence because of a coordinating structure, common resources, and shared goals of every parties involved. These efforts are done in order to generate efficiency in utilizing the resources available to each stakeholders present.

The Local Government Code of the Philippines⁹⁴, otherwise known as Republic Act No. 7160, gave birth to the idea of devolution of powers of local government units (LGUs) in the Philippines from its central government. It grants every local communities with genuine and meaningful local autonomy in order for them to attain their fullest development as self-reliant communities and enable them to become more effective partners in the pursuance and fulfillment of national development goals. However, there are challenges that have emerged concerning the policies and implementation related to the structure of the local government system, as well as the mismatch between resources and responsibility of government for the delivery of public service (European Union Delegation to the Philippines, & Philippine Development Forum, 2010: 23). As a result, it enabled for the application of inter-local collaboration as an approach to mitigate these policies and implementation constraints of devolution.

A study conducted by White, et al. (2006: 295), shows that there were several ICM projects that have established demonstration sites (such as in Batangas Bay and Bataan Bay) in order to test the viability, effectiveness, and sustainability of ICM programs under the coordination of provincial governments. Moreover, such provincial programs have also promoted public awareness and participation of stakeholders.

The LGUs in the province of Batangas function autonomously from one another. For an intensified implementation of the ICM program in the entire coastline of the province, an inter-local collaboration arrangement has been established. Likewise, since these coastal areas are contiguous, it is necessary for them to harmonize their policies with their neighboring coastal communities. Thus, this paper will provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the inter-local collaboration of Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities

⁹⁴ The Local Government Code of the Philippines was proposed by Senator Aquilino Pimentel. It was passed by the Philippine Congress and approved in October 10, 1991.

in Batangas province as regards their policy, processes and systems, collaborative initiatives, and mechanisms used in order to successfully implement the ICM program in the province.

This paper will likewise prove the importance of two theories—the Model of Collaborative Governance (MCG), and Common Pool Resource Theory (CPRT). The MCG analyzes the relationship of different stakeholders involved in a collaboration. On the other hand, CPRT focuses on the different factors which show how inter-local collaboration arrangements are established.

The assessment of the inter-local collaboration between Batangas City and the 14 Coastal Municipalities of Batangas as regards the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) program entails a wide variety of factors in the local government system. As such, this research has theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research will be of great importance in proving Model of Collaborative Governance, and Common Pool Resource Theory. The MCG is essential in analyzing the relationship of different stakeholders involved in a collaboration, while the CPRT establishes the criteria that are grounded for a collaboration to work. In a practical perspective, this research could serve as a model of an effective inter-local collaboration of local government units (LGUs), or different stakeholders, within and outside the Philippines as regards the implementation of a particular project, program, or policy.

This research study commences with the review of related literature regarding collaborative governance, Integrated Coastal Management and Coastal Resources Management. Subsequently, the Model of Collaborative Governance (MCG) and Common Pool Resources Theory (CPRT) are explained together with their relevance to the focus of this study. The next section devoted to the presentation of the Conceptual Framework of the paper. It is followed by the discussion regarding the evaluative design of the study, which is followed by the findings and conclusion of the paper.

Collaborative Governance as an Approach in Implementing ICM Program

Collaborative governance, according to Bevir (2009: 47), is an attempt to create and conduct policy which involves the participation of different sectors bringing together various interest, perspectives, and knowledge in the policy making process. The study concluded that collaboration can bring advantages in policy-making process, deep explanations of proposed policies, and can innovate and increase the legitimacy of public policy. In contrast, traditional governance, according to Innes & Booher (2010: 201), relies on a concept of bureaucracy characterized by a top-down hierarchy under a central control. It is a process of simple civilian analogue military command: the bureaucrat takes order from above and issues them downward (Donahue & Zeckhauser, 2011: 234). In 2010 and 2011, Innes and Booher, and Donahue and Zeckhauser respectively agreed that collaborative governance is a structure involving distributive control, open boundaries, and independent nested network cluster of participants. It also brings teams together and help them build their collective capacity to address the problem they are confronting.

Kim (2010: 77) concluded that in South Korea, the national government has acted as a facilitator in the collaborative governance toward the implementation of the principle of sustainable development. This is supported by Banyai (2010: 153), indicating that collaborative governance is more similar to reality through enactment of sound policies, leadership, and promotion of other development strategies. In contrary, inter-personal disagreements and conflicts between partners or potential partners can deter the collaboration, and post as a hurdle in maintaining an existing collaborative arrangement (Catmur, 2008: 259). However, in 2012, Orbista observed in his study that the employment of the collaboration of local governments will lead to an efficient and improved delivery of public goods and services.

The Section 33 of the Local Government Code of 1991 of the Republic of the Philippines⁹⁵ provides that “local government units (LGUs) may, through appropriate ordinances, group themselves, consolidate or coordinate their efforts, services and resources for purpose commonly beneficial to them.” Alliances are also presented vis-à-vis

⁹⁵ Chapter III, Article III, Inter-Local Government Relations, Section 33, Cooperative Undertakings among Local Government Units. Accessed through: http://www.lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1991/ra_7160_1991.html

with inter-local collaboration. This happens when groups of geographically adjacent and contiguous LGUs come together as a group for a long-term basis in order to jointly provide services and implement projects.

Integrated Coastal Management Program (ICM)

Integrated Coastal Management is a holistic management of framework whose ultimate purpose is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of coastal governance in terms of its ability to achieve the sustainable use of coastal resources and of the services generated by the ecosystems in the coastal areas⁹⁶. It envisions to do this by protecting the functional integrity of these natural resource systems while allowing economic development to proceed⁹⁷. It is one of the overall goals and objectives of the Provincial Strategic Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) of Batangas in promoting the maintenance, conservation, and protection of the environment and its natural resources to be of benefit to the existing and future generations.

According to Polunin (2008: 6), coastal systems are economically and ecologically important because any changes that will be occurring in these ecosystems are likely to negatively affect tourism, fisheries and biodiversity in a specific coastal area. It is also economically significant because of the positive contributions to the economic performance of a particular country (Mendoza, 2010). In a data released in 2005 by The World Bank Group⁹⁸, an estimated amount of at least \$1.064 billion have contributed annually to the country's economy only with the lone effort of the Philippine coral reefs. Through proper utilization of coastal and marine resources, these resources become significant assets to the country's economy.

The Philippines, although widely recognized as a global priority for marine conservation, also faces serious problem of the apparent degradation of its marine and coastal environment resources (Weeks, R., et al., 2009: 232). Maypa et al. (2012: 511) pointed out that the marine resources conservation in the Philippines is critical to the maintenance of global marine diversity. However, the Philippines' coastal environment is experiencing degradation caused by a variety of uncontrolled human activities including the

⁹⁶ Provincial Government-Batangas, Philippines and PEMSEA, *State of the Coasts of Batangas Province*, p. 1.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ The Philippines Environment Monitor 2005

overexploitation of fisheries and destructive fishing methods, as well as unplanned, or illegal and improper shoreline development among others (White, et al., 2006: 288). Also, inconsistent laws, inadequate regulations, weak enforcement, lack of funding, poor planning and weak management of the concerned agencies in the country (World Wildlife Fund 2015). With this phenomenon, it suggests for the staggering need for better marine management which led to an opportunistic rush to establish marine protected areas and other forms of marine management (Pendleton & Lotker, 2012: 11). More so, Landry (2010: 3) noted that there is an increasing demand for public, private, and government sectors for a coastal resource management regime which will ensure the sustainability of coastal natural resources while meeting the local needs of the people it serves.

Further, the Philippines has an existing Memorandum Circular enacted by its Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)— Memorandum Circular No. 2008-03 (2008, September 9) which is in support of the sustainable development of the country through proper protection and conservation, utilization and development of natural resources, and provide for a clean and healthy environmental quality. Moreover, there is an existing national policy, under the Executive Order No. 533 series of 2006⁹⁹, which enables for the adoption of the ICM program as a strategy for sustainable development of coastal and marine area in the country. In the Philippines, Davao del Sur¹⁰⁰, Marinduque¹⁰¹, and Zambales¹⁰² are implementing their own programs for coastal management.

The provinces of Bataan and Guimaras show the importance of the implementation of the ICM program in their respective localities. As a matter of fact, these two provinces in the Philippines are in the front run on the successful implementation of the said program. The ICM program of the province of Bataan is considered as one of the best practices which exemplify a strong engagement of the private or business sector in the management of the coastal areas whose function is not only limited to rendering financial support, but also

⁹⁹ Executive No. 533 was signed by the former Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in June 6, 2006 to adopt Integrated Coastal Management as a national strategy to ensure the sustainable development of the country's coastal and marine environment and resources and establishing support mechanism for its implementation.

¹⁰⁰ Mallari, A. L. (2008). *Assessment of Municipal Coastal Database in the Formulation of Coastal Resource Management Plan in elected Municipalities in Davao del Sur (Master's Thesis)*. University of Southeastern Philippines, Davao City.

¹⁰¹ Lim, R. M. (2008). *Water Quality Services and Consumers' Level of Satisfaction at the Local Government Units in Marinduque (Master's Thesis)*. Marinduque State College, Marinduque.

¹⁰² Reyes, J. (2011, October 20). ADB OKs P17.5-M Grant for Coastal Management Projects in Zambales. *Manila Bulletin*, p. 13.

functions as co-implementers of the ICM program in the province (PEMSEA, 2006). Whereas, the province of Guimaras intensifies the implementation of their own version of the ICM program in through establishing partnership with private stakeholders and the national agencies of the Philippine government (Escopel, 2015).

Coastal Resources Management (CRM) in the Philippines

Coastal Resources Management is indeed important for the management of the coastal areas and resources, not only in the Philippines but in the entire world. In 2004, Dr. Israel, in his study of the CRM initiatives in Panguil Bay¹⁰³, has found out that the control over resources and communities compliance to the rules and regulations have improved in the last 10 years of CRM, and will positively continue to improve in the future. However, negative implications of the CRM in the community have also been expressed. As an aid, integration of the CRM with other institutions, procedural certainty and clarity, and inter-agency consultation and cooperation in the development and implementation of policy is needed to achieve a long-term success.

In a research conducted by Espectato (2007: 9), Coastal Resource Management Councils (CRMCs) serve as venue in addressing the common concerns of the LGUs involved, and the resolution of conflicts associated with resource utilization. Additionally, he concluded that in order for partnerships to be sustainable, they should be formalized and institutionalized.

Another research work shows that the Philippines is shifting toward different trends such as the replacement of ICM program to the fisheries development and habitat management which provides emphasis on the need for improved integration and collaboration. Being considered is the effect of decentralization which increases the responsibility and management of LGUs with their municipal waters and coastal resources, as well as the importance of the multi-sector (e.g. public sector, business sector, non-government organizations) collaboration in solving coastal resource management that exist because of several factors (White, et al., 2006: 298).

¹⁰³ Located at the Mindanao island of the Philippines; is connected to Iligan Bay, and possesses extensive intertidal mudflats and mangrove swamps. Provinces of Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga del Sur, and Lanao del Norte are its land borders.

Coastal Resources Management in other Countries

Coastal resource management is a new world trend that envisions to solve and mitigate the problems in the coastal areas to attain a sustainable development. Lau (2003: 120-124) elucidated that in China, the central government institutions have developed legislation for the coastal zone—Coastal Zone Act and Sea Area Use Law—which provides opportunity to the efficient management of coastal areas. The study pointed out the need for innovation in the local level in order to improve the management of the coastal areas, because local laws and regulations regarding the matter are limited and the presence of regional efforts is still rare. China also practices the concept of public participation in their policy development and implementation which is essential for a successful integrated coastal management. Finally, the study concluded that China's central and local government initiatives should be harmonized—the ICM program of China will partly be centrally controlled and implemented top-down, and partly initiated bottom-up.

On a later year, Hasheela (2008: 36) averred that one of the main problems in the implementation of ICM program in Bahamas is the inter-governmental coordination. The study explained that the coordination between the district councils, town councils, and the national government is unsystematic. With this, there is confusion on the roles and responsibilities of the involved government units for the development of the coastal areas.

In Portugal, relative chaos exists in the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) which leads to a dispersion of capacities on several entities and lack of coordination. To eradicate this chaos and efficiently implement the ICZM program, the Portuguese government should first solve the complex juridical and institutional framework, resulting with large number of entities with jurisdiction on coastal zones to foster coordination and cooperation (Pinto, 2004: 156).

However, in United Kingdom, the reorganization of local government on the Isle of Wight provided opportunities to reappraise coastal policies, increasing interests, awareness of coastal issues, and the sustainability of the coastal areas. The preparation and implementation of sustainable policies through the employment of collaboration, as well as consultations with organizations and individuals involved in the management of coastal areas are vital (McInness, Jewell, & Roberts, 1998: 305). Also, other countries in the world

are also adopting their own version of coastal management programs such as in Costa Rica¹⁰⁴, Australia¹⁰⁵, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand¹⁰⁶

Model of Collaborative Governance (MCG)

The Model of Collaborative Governance shows the role of different stakeholders who work collectively in the decision-making process in order to produce an outcome that is embedded by their collaborative actions. In this model, the stakeholders are expected to participate in all stages of the decision-making (Freeman, 1997). Ansell and Gash (2007), moreover, elucidated that the model is a process which stakeholders governed collectively to produce a collective output. Additionally, this model presents the factors which ignited for the creation of the collaborative efforts, the external force affecting the collaboration, and the collaboration process itself which results to the production of outcomes.

MCG begins with several factors which serve as foundations for the establishment of a collaboration (red rectangle). These include the power and resource imbalances, incentives and constraints to participate, and the prehistory of antagonism and cooperation of the stakeholders. Additionally, facilitative leadership (lower yellow rectangle) and an institutional design (upper yellow rectangle) are essential components to integrate different parties together, and to set and maintain clear ground rules in the collaboration. Nevertheless, presence of external influences (purple rectangle) can also affect the collaborative process.

The collaborative process (blue rectangle) is cyclical, and involves stages of which collaboration takes in place in order to produce a collective output among stakeholders (Ansel & Gash, 2007). Collaboration revolves on communication, trust among stakeholders, commitment, shared understanding, and intermediate outcomes. Eventually, collective outcomes (green rectangle) are expected to be produced by the collaboration that has been established.

¹⁰⁴ Honey, M., et al. (2010). *Impact of Tourism Related Development on the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica: Summary Report*. Center for Responsible Travel, Washington, DC.

¹⁰⁵ Human, B. A. (2010). *Strategic Framework for Marine and Coastal Resource Condition Monitoring in the Pilbara and Kimberley Regions of Western Australia*. Department of Fisheries, Government of Western Australia.

¹⁰⁶ Nasuchon, N. (2009). *Coastal Management and Community Management in Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand, With a Case Study of Thai Fisheries Management*. Division for Ocean Affairs and The Law of the Sea Office Of Legal Affairs, The United Nations, New York.

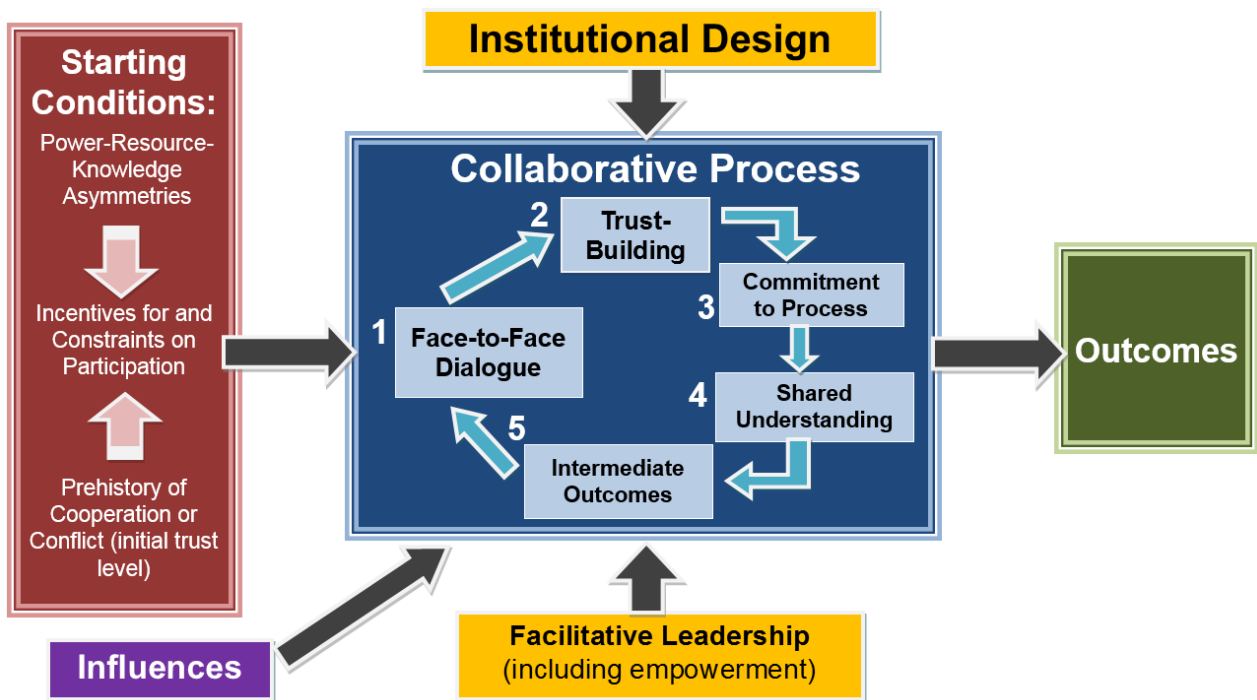


Figure 2: Model of Collaborative Governance (Ansell and Gash, 2007)

This model shows the structure of collaborative governance which is indeed necessary to understand in analyzing inter-local collaboration. Furthermore, it acts as a guidepost in undertaking the factors which foster and influence a collaboration of stakeholders to arrive into a collective goal. Thus, this model is useful in assessing the effectiveness of the inter-local collaboration of Batangas city and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province in implementing the ICM program.

Common Pool Resource Theory (CPRT)

Ostrom (1990) explicated that dilemmas on common pool resource exist because individuals in interdependent situations do not coordinate their actions. This phenomenon commonly leads to worse outcomes. CPRT suggests that appropriators are capable of generating solutions to these common pool resource dilemmas. This theory likewise represents a significant approach for the governance of natural resources and in providing resolution of critical environmental problems through collaborative and cooperative actions of appropriators in an interdependent situation.

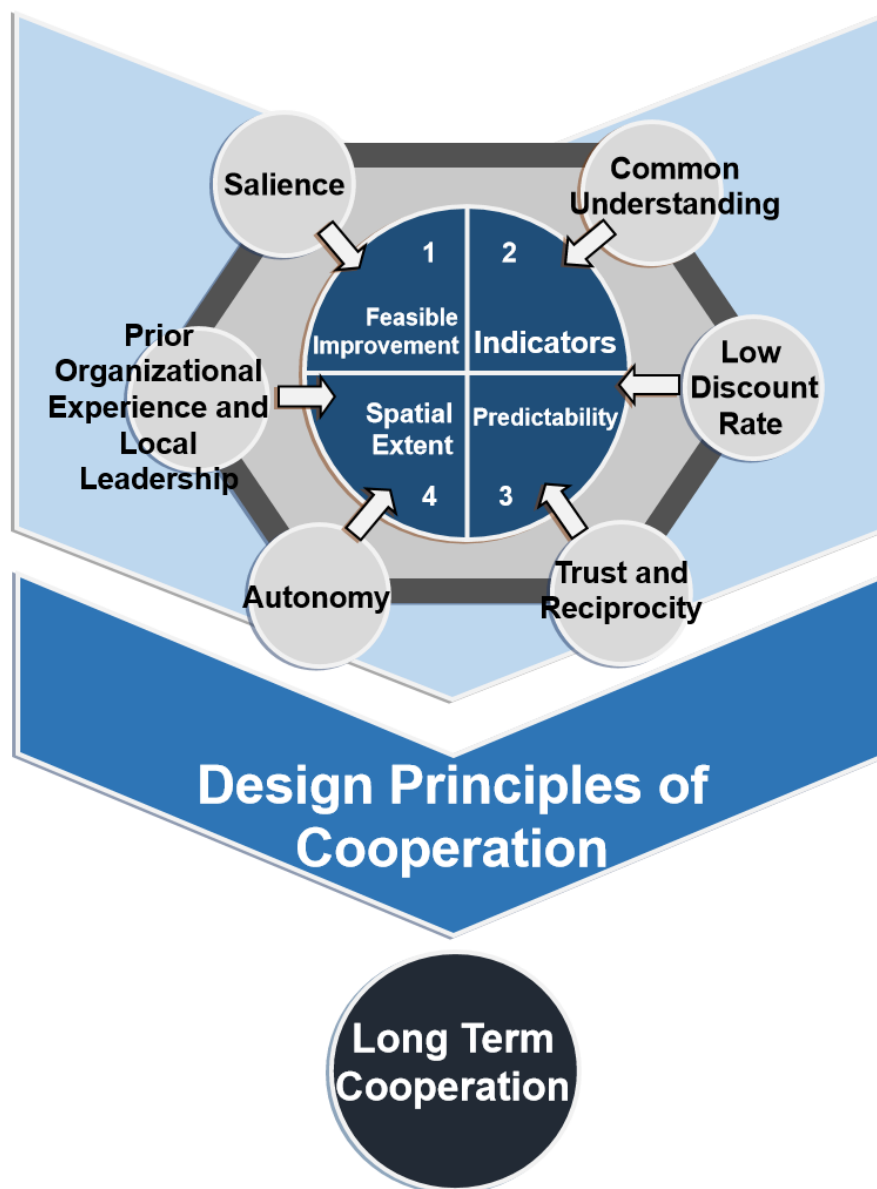


Figure 3: Common Pool Resource Theory (Ostrom, 1990)

This theory of Ostrom, as illustrated above by the authors of this paper, presents the factors in which cooperation and collaboration are established. It shows the vital elements on how inter-local collaboration takes place and how it persists. The inner circle divided into four quadrants indicates the attributions of a common pool resource. These include 'feasible improvement' (first quadrant) which implies that the resource condition should not be deteriorated (which will make it useless to organize, nor underutilized) and only little advantage can be generated from organizing. Second, 'indicators' (second quadrant) constitute the reliable and valid indicators of the resource system which are frequently

available at a relatively low cost. Additionally, 'predictability' (third quadrant) deals with the predictable flow of resource units. Lastly, 'spatial extent' (fourth quadrant) discusses that resource system should be sufficiently small considering the factors of transportation and communication technology.

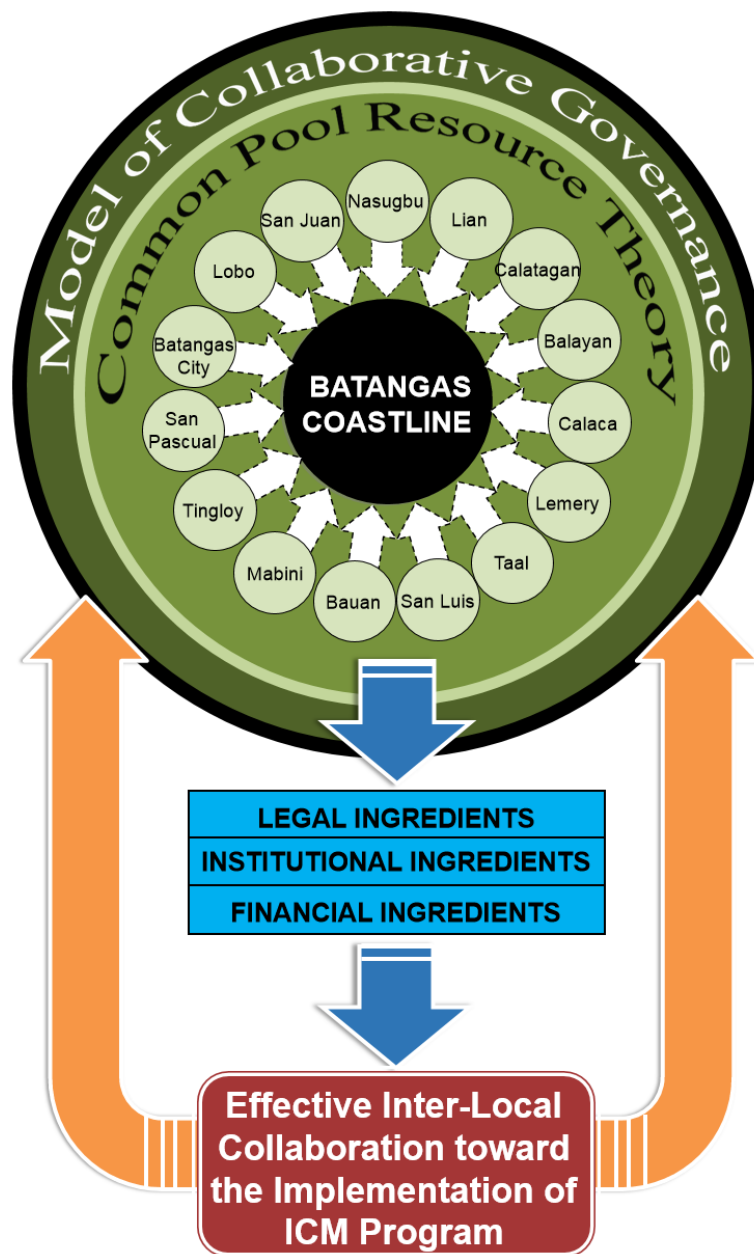
On the other hand, the theory also provides several attributions of the appropriators who support the establishment of cooperation toward a common pool resource. The six interconnected circles represent the attributions of appropriators in dealing with a common pool resource. This attributions must be present in order to foster cooperation among appropriators governing a common resource. These include salience, common understanding, low discount rate, trust and reciprocity, autonomy, and prior organizational experience and local leadership.

It is presented in Figure 3 that there are two large arrows pointing south. The first arrow consists of the attributions of the common resource, and of the appropriators in fostering cooperation and collaboration. The second arrow is devoted to the eight design principles of cooperation: (1) clearly defined boundaries, (2) congruence of rules in local conditions, (3) collective choice arrangements, (4) monitors are accountable to the resource users, (5) graduated sanctions against violators, (6) ready access to conflict resolution mechanisms, (7) recognition of rights to organize, and (8) nested enterprise. These principles are responsible in creating a well-established cooperation between the appropriators. The by-product of the above-mentioned mechanisms is the establishment of a long-term cooperation (lower circle) or collaboration between appropriators.

Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework is guided by the two theories utilized—the Model of Collaborative Governance, and Common Pool Resource Theory. This framework focuses on the successful implementation of the ICM program through the inter-local collaboration of Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province. In this framework, the MCG is taken into account in studying the effectiveness of the existing inter-local collaboration of LGUs in Batangas in implementing the ICM program in their respective communities. With this, MCG helps to explain the importance of collaborative

process and arrangements of the LGUs of Batangas in achieving a successful implementation of the ICM.



Source: Authors

Figure 4: Conceptual Framework

The coastline of Batangas has been regarded as a common pool resource by most LGUs in the province because of its extensive length. Failure on the proper management of their

respective coastal area affects other LGUs situated on other parts of its coastlines. The CPRT explains that such common pool resource dilemmas emerged because LGUs in interdependent situations do not coordinate their actions together. This theory proposes that common pool resource dilemmas can be solved through establishing a collaborative effort among concerned LGUs. The application of this theory shows the inter-local collaboration of different LGUs of Batangas in implementing the ICM program as part of their collective goal.

The paper will likewise discuss the capacities, capabilities, influences, and initiatives of LGUs in assessing the collaboration. This is done through analyzing the existence of the critical legal, institutional, and financial ingredients in establishing and sustaining a collaboration. Furthermore, the paper will also give emphasis on the effects of this collaboration. The effect of the collaboration consists of the successful implementation of the ICM program through policy-making and implementation in the collaborative process. This, in turn, will create a feedback loop that will bring impacts to the involved LGUs collectively.

Evaluative Design

The descriptive method¹⁰⁷ following an evaluative design¹⁰⁸ using the qualitative approach was the main research technique employed for this assessment. The system of collaboration of Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province as regards the implementation of the ICM program was given focus. Moreover, the inter-local collaboration of LGUs in Batangas has been assessed through an evaluative design of research based on the critical ingredients of alliance formation and strengthening of the cooperation of Local Government Units (LGUs) which was formulated by the Philippine Development Forum Working Group on Decentralization and Local Government's Sub-Working Group on Inter-Local Cooperation (2010). A qualitative approach¹⁰⁹ was used where in-depth interviews were conducted with the City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) of Batangas City, Municipal Environment and Natural

¹⁰⁷ Attempts to describe systematically and give information about a phenomenon, practices, process, structures, programs, policies, and a particular situation in the society (Kumar, 2005: 4)

¹⁰⁸ Weiss (as cited in Msila & Setlhako, 2013: 1) posited that it measures the effects of a program against the goals it set out to accomplished as a way to contribute subsequently in decision-making for possible improvements

¹⁰⁹ Seeks to discover the underlying motives and desires guiding one's decision in order to generate a larger knowledge on a particular phenomenon (Kothari, 2004; Tracy, 2013; Barbour, 2014)

Resources Office (MENRO) of the 14 coastal municipalities, Batangas Provincial Government Environment and Natural Resources Office (PG-ENRO), and Partnership in the Environmental Management of Seas of the East Asia (PEMSEA), ocular visits and observations, and document reviews were employed to fabricate an empirical basis.

In measuring the effectiveness of the inter-local cooperation, there are three essential ingredients (which also consist of sub-ingredients) namely: legal, institutional, and financial were considered in establishing and sustaining a collaboration as formulated by the Philippine Development Forum Working Group on Decentralization and Local Government's Sub-Working Group on Inter-Local Cooperation¹¹⁰ (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Critical Ingredients for Effective Inter-Local Government Unit (LGU) Cooperation

LEGAL INGREDIENTS

- a) Adoption of a binding legal instrument (MOA);
- b) Concurrence to MOA;
- c) Mandatory review of the MOA;
- d) Adoption of joint resolutions;
- e) Ratification of agreements and decisions;
- f) Harmonization of policies; and
- g) Legal mechanisms to address non-compliance to MOA

INSTITUTIONAL INGREDIENTS

- a) Alliance champion;
- b) A common base;
- c) A common purpose;
- d) Active involvement of Mayors;
- e) Implementing structure;
- f) Trigger issues;
- g) Strategic plan;
- h) Manual of operations;
- i) Transforming projects into essential services; and
- j) Capacity to adapt to changing conditions and challenges

FINANCIAL INGREDIENTS

- a) Commitment to share resources among members;
 - b) Use of an accepted formula for the monetary contributions of members;
 - c) Timely collection of committed funds;
 - d) Capacity and will to generate own resources;
 - e) Capability to tap external sources of funds;
 - f) Matching of resources with goals and programs;
 - g) Proper funds management arrangement;
 - h) Use of approved guidelines in fund utilization; and
 - i) Transparency in financial transactions
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¹¹⁰ European Union Delegation to the Philippines, & Philippine Development Forum. (2010). *Cooperation in Action: Lessons from the 2nd Inter-Local Government Units Alliances Summit*. Philippines: European Union Delegation to the Philippines

The *Legal* ingredients refer to the adoption of a binding legal instrument for the formation of the cooperation of LGUs. This ingredient will examine if the existing inter-local collaboration of the LGUs of the coastal communities in Batangas adheres to a particular law or agreement.

Institutional ingredients contribute to the effectiveness of the collaboration, which are particularly focused on the factors such as confidence-building, institutionalization, and evolution present in the collaborative arrangement.

Finally, the *Financial* ingredients include the ability of the collaboration to generate funds needed in order to perform its responsibility (i.e. proper allocation of funds, transparent financial transactions, fund management, etc.).

Analysis and Findings

The framework which was formulated by the Philippine Development Forum Working Group on Decentralization and Local Government's Sub-Working Group on Inter-Local Cooperation (2010) as regards the critical ingredients needed in building and sustaining a collaboration was utilized as the criteria in assessing the collaboration. The following discussions present the results of the assessment of the inter-local collaboration of Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of the province as regards the implementation of the ICM program in the province framework. These critical ingredients are divided into three main categories: legal ingredients, institutional ingredients, and financial ingredients.

Table 2: The Assessment of the Inter-local Collaboration between Batangas City and 14 Coastal Municipalities of Batangas based on the Legal Ingredients

LEGAL INGREDIENTS	EXISTING	NON-EXISTING
a) Adoption of a binding legal instrument (MOA);	√	
b) Concurrence to MOA;	√	
c) Mandatory review of the MOA;		√
d) Adoption of joint resolutions;	√	
e) Ratification of agreements and decisions;	√	
f) Harmonization of policies; and	√	
g) Legal mechanisms to address non-compliance to MOA	√	

First, the legal ingredients refer to the legal instruments (i.e. Memoranda of Agreement) which the collaboration adopts in order to establish cooperation among its member LGUs. Moreover, it also includes the capacities of the coastal LGUs to concur with the binding legal instruments which provide them the responsibility to harmonize their policies with other members of the collaboration. The analysis done in prior discussions show that, the collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province as regards the implementation of the ICM program has achieved 6 out of 7 components of the legal ingredients in establishing and sustaining alliances. The collaboration of the coastal LGUs of the province was not able to meet the requirement of a mandatory review of the legal instruments adopted. However, this challenge could still be addressed by establishing a committee whose function is devoted to reviewing the Memoranda of Agreement of the collaboration to prevent some provisions to become outdated.

Table 3: The Assessment of the Inter-local Collaboration between Batangas City and 14 Coastal Municipalities of Batangas based on the Institutional Ingredients

INSTITUTIONAL INGREDIENTS	EXISTING	NON-EXISTING
a) Alliance champion;	√	
b) A common base;	√	
c) A common purpose;	√	
d) Active involvement of Mayors;		√
e) Implementing structure;	√	
f) Trigger issues;	√	
g) Strategic plan;	√	
h) Manual of operations;	√	
i) Transforming projects into essential services; and	√	
j) Capacity to adapt to changing conditions and challenges	√	

The second critical ingredients are the institutional ingredients. These include the institutional structures that exist in the collaboration, and likewise involve the functions and responsibilities of each members in the collaboration. The data gathered shows the active involvement of the respective Local Chief Executives (LCEs) of Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province does not existing in the collaboration. Given this result, 9 out of its 10 components were met by the collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province. The appointment of focal persons in each coastal LGUs in lieu of the non-involvement of the LCEs in the implementation of the ICM program was pursued in order to respond to this problem. Consequently, these

focal persons had been performing their duties and responsibilities efficiently for the ICM implementation in the province.

Moreover, the researchers found out that the inter-local collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province has a particular alliance champion which acts as the main actor in the collaboration. The alliance champion provides facilitative leadership among the other member LGUs in the collaboration. This paper reveals that the PG-ENRO¹¹¹ of Batangas is considered as the alliance champion of the collaboration. Furthermore, the ICM Coordinator¹¹² of the Batangas PG-ENRO discussed that the implementation of the ICM program in their province is divided into three phases: in the coastal area of the Balayan Bay and adjacent bays, Batangas Bay, and Tayabas Bay and adjacent bays. This strategy of a relative specialization in the implementation of the ICM program is employed in order to address the distinct needs of each bay areas of Batangas. Hence, the coastal LGUs situated in a particular bay region collaborate for the management of their respective bay area in accordance to the framework of the ICM program.

Table 4: The Assessment of the Inter-local Collaboration between Batangas City and 14 Coastal Municipalities of Batangas based on the Financial Ingredients

FINANCIAL INGREDIENTS	EXISTING	NON-EXISTING
a) Commitment to share resources among members;	√	
b) Use of an accepted formula for the monetary contributions of members;		√
c) Timely collection of committed funds;		√
d) Capacity and will to generate own resources;	√	
e) Capability to tap external sources of funds;	√	
f) Matching of resources with goals and programs;	√	
g) Proper funds management arrangement;	√	
h) Use of approved guidelines in fund utilization; and	√	
i) Transparency in financial transactions		√

Lastly, the financial ingredients of a collaboration are also essential to be taken into consideration in assessing the effectiveness of the collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas as regards the implementation of the ICM program. The collaboration has convincingly met most of these financial ingredients by achieving 6

¹¹¹ Provincial Government of Batangas Environment and Natural Resources Office is an institution which spearheads the coordination and implementation of projects as regards the issues on environment and natural resources of the province

¹¹² Mrs. Loreta A. Sollestre

out of its 9 components. Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas do not make monetary contributions, and timely collection of committed funds for the implementation of the ICM program as they are only granted with limited funds by the provincial government. On the one hand, as its statutory obligation, the provincial government allots a separate annual budget for each LGUs which is appropriated for the ICM implementation. Also not present is the capacity of the collaboration to generate financial reports of the expenditures related to the implementation of the ICM program in the province. A meeting is instead conducted twice a month in order to discuss the issues and accomplishments as regards the ICM implementation, but is, however, not only limited to discussing transparency in their financial transactions.

In accordance to the qualitative approach of study employed through ocular visits, sets of interviews, and library researches, the paper further reveals that the inter-local collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province as regards the implementation of the ICM program has achieved an overall total of 21 out of 26 ingredients needed in a collaboration. Given this result, the collaboration has dominantly met the critical ingredients in building and sustaining a collaboration. There are, however, five ingredients which the collaboration of the coastal LGUs of Batangas failed to meet, namely: (1) the mandatory review of their binding legal instruments, (2) active involvement of LCEs, (3) monetary contributions of the members of the collaboration, (4) timely collection of committed funds, and (5) transparency in financial transactions. Despite of these, the collaboration is still considered to be an effective strategy in implementing the ICM program in the province of Batangas. Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of the province, through the supervision of the PG-ENRO, were able to respond to these non-existing critical ingredients. These efforts made by PG-ENRO in order to address these challenges are, however, still insufficient in order to meet these ingredients.

Conclusion

The paper reveals that the inter-local collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province as regards the implementation of the ICM program is effective. This is despite of the fact that the paper showed that several critical ingredient were not met—mandatory review of binding legal instruments (legal ingredient); active involvement of LCEs (institutional ingredient); and the monetary contributions of

members, timely collection of committed funds, and transparency of financial transactions (financial ingredients). The overwhelmingly existence of the ingredients under legal, institutional, and financial aspects proved that the inter-local collaboration is effective even with the absence of the five aforementioned ingredients.

Interviews with the PG-ENRO, MENRO¹¹³, and CENRO¹¹⁴ focal persons supported the claim that the implementation of the ICM program in the province of Batangas, through inter-local collaboration approach undertaken by Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of the province, is successful and effective. With this, the collaboration of the coastal LGUs of the province materializes their objectives to properly manage the coastal areas, as well as the conservation, protection, rehabilitation, and development of the coasts and its resources.

The PG-ENRO functions as the alliance champion of the collaboration, and provides facilitative leadership to Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas. In an interview conducted by the researchers, the ICM Coordinator of the Batangas PG-ENRO discussed that the office conducts evaluation and ocular visits in Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas in order to ensure the condition and proper implementation of the ICM program. In addition to that, the PG-ENRO also provides capacity building development, and enhancement of the LGUs through seminars, conferences, trainings, and workshops which is in line with the inter-local collaborative approach of the implementation of the ICM program.

This paper likewise presents that employing relative specialization is part of establishing an effective collaboration toward the different needs of the bay areas in Batangas. LGUs act and respond collectively in addressing the distinct needs of Balayan Bay and adjacent bays, Batangas Bay, and Tayabas Bay and adjacent bays. This suggests that the collaboration between Batangas City and 14 municipalities of Batangas, through its implementing strategies and mechanisms, is effective.

The manifestation of the cooperation between Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas toward the implementation of the ICM program is shown through the ordinances which are followed by the coastal LGUs, as well as the Memoranda

¹¹³ Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office

¹¹⁴ City Environment and Natural Resource Office

of Agreement which they have ratified as their binding legal documents. Moreover, the existence of common purposes and issues between these coastal LGUs bind them to act collaboratively in order to achieve and address the needs of their respective coastal areas. Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas recognize the inter-local collaboration approach as an essential strategy in the successful attainment of the goals and objectives of the ICM program in their province.

Despite the effectiveness of the inter-local collaboration of Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas, the collaboration is not without problems which weaken its effectiveness. These challenges include the (1) absence of a mandatory review of the different binding legal documents, (2) poor involvement of the LCEs, (3) use of a formula for monetary contributions, (4) absence of timely collection of committed funds, and (5) transparency in financial transactions. However, these challenges are insufficient to consider that the collaboration is ineffective. As majority of the critical ingredients are present, this paper concludes that the collaboration between Batangas City and 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province is effective.

Today, PG-ENRO and the collaboration between Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of the province continue their effective collaboration toward the implementation of the ICM program. Trainings, seminars, conferences, and workshops are conducted for the improvement on the institutional and technical capacities of each coastal LGUs which are in support for the effectiveness of the collaboration. Aside from the provincial government and the LGUs of Batangas, the national government agencies, nongovernment organizations, and development organizations also partake in helping the collaboration of Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas to employ different strategies in their collaboration as regard the implementation of the ICM program.

Future Research

Future research as regards employing inter-local collaboration toward the implementation of a particular project or program could provide a better understanding on the significance of the inter-local collaboration as an approach to governance. Moreover, this paper recommends scholars to apply different theories and methodologies which can be utilized

for the improvement of the study. In addition to this, the integration of external institutions (i.e. development organizations, nongovernment institutions, private institutions, and civil society organizations), which are involved in the implementation of the ICM program, as variables of the study is essential in the assessment of the collaboration between Batangas City and the 14 coastal municipalities of Batangas province.

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