

Project Update: August 2013

In April 2013, a 3-day Environmental Youth Camp was held at the village of Balatubat in Camiguin Island. The activity was conducted in partnership with Department of Environment and Natural Resources Region 2's Integrated Coastal Resources Management Project, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and the Local Government Unit of Calayan. A total of 24 students from five different municipalities in Cagayan Province, including Batanes participated in the youth camp. Students were from Camiguin and Calayan Islands, Aparri, Gonzaga, Sanchez Mira and Batanes listened to talks about the rich biodiversity in their environment. Through various interactive lectures and activities students deepened their understanding and awareness of the environment and created strong alliances with fellow delegates who all believe in environmental preservation and conservation. At the end of the camp students created "plans" that they could execute in their own communities and schools.

In support of the local island community's conservation efforts, we helped draft the management plan and implementing rules and regulations for the proposed "Balatubat Marine Protected and Humpback Whale Conservation Area (MPHWCA)". The project also produced 100 t-shirts for the village sea patrol group (*bantay dagat*) for use in patrolling and monitoring their marine protected area. The t-shirts will be distributed in November 2013, or as soon as the sea conditions permit crossing to the Island.

In response to the threat posed by the black sand mining operation in Camiguin Island, we provided assistance and support to a group of local teachers and concerned citizens by providing information materials regarding the detrimental effects of this activity and sent letters of concern to relevant government agencies. We also launched a social media campaign to stop this illegal mining activity with the help of supporters and online news media contacts.

