

PHILIPPINES. Bohol Town Assesses MPA to Improve Management of Marine Areas

About 40 barangay officials and members of people's organizations in charge of managing local marine protected areas (MPAs) participated in a daylong MPA assessment, using the MPA Management Effectiveness Assessment Tool or MEAT, conducted recently in Tubigon, Bohol by USAID's BALANCED Philippines Project in partnership with Bohol Environmental Management Office (BEMO) and the local government unit of Tubigon. MEAT, a set of questionnaires answered by MPA stakeholders during a workshop, assesses MPA governance in terms of enforcement, implementation and maintenance, with results used as basis for drawing up a plan to further improve its management. Discussion on integrating population, health and environment (PHE) efforts – stressing the importance of managing the population in tandem with MPA management to sustain conservation gains – highlights MEAT activities. The Project has so far held nine MEAT activities to help increase the effectiveness of at least 10 MPAs (covering about 400 hectares) in sites located in the Danajon Bank and Verde island Passage that are rich in marine biodiversity.



Participants listen intently during the conduct of the MPA assessment using the MEAT. Mayor William Jao of Tubigon (far left inset), a staunch supporter of integrated population-health-environment program, stresses the importance of MEAT. Adel Salutan of the Bohol Environmental Management Office (other inset) explains the MEAT tool. (BALANCED Philippines/PFPI photos by Neil Antoque)