



DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

University of the Philippines Diliman
College of Engineering

Velasquez St.,
UP Diliman
1101 Quezon City

May 18, 2021

Maria Lourdes G. Ferrer, CESO III
Regional Executive Director
DENR MIMAROPA Region

ATTN: Krystal Dayne T. Villanada
Protected Area Superintendent
Apo Reef Natural Park
Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro

Dear Director Ferrer,

I write your office to seek permission to conduct a mesophotic depth fish survey at the Apo Reef National Park. This survey will be conducted under the auspices of the DOST-PCAARRD Project titled "DeepFish360: Development of a Mesophotic Reef Fish Imaging System" whose objective to collect fish census videos at mesophotic depths using a ROV-mounted stereo camera rig system that is under development.

Given that studies at mesophotic reefs are limited by conventional SCUBA diving techniques, with the development of this stereo camera rig system, we will be able to easily monitor mesophotic fish resources without the need for a diver. We plan to use our rig system in various mesophotic reefs with depths of 30 meters and have selected the Apo Reef Natural Park as one of our sites. As Apo Reef is the second largest contiguous reef in the world and the largest one in the Philippines, and with its very high marine biodiversity, we believe that surveying the reefs of ARNP will best maximize the potential of our project as well as contribute to the knowledge of understudied mesophotic ecosystems.

If permitted, we intend to conduct our field survey during the second or third quarter of 2021. Raw data collected during the survey, composed of footages captured with our rig system at mesophotic depths, will be shared with your office. We will also share with you processed data, although this will only be available after completion of the development of the algorithm for fish analyses before the end of the project in February 2022. We believe that data sharing is essential to fuel progress in the field, as well as propel efforts toward the protection of our marine resources.

Respectfully yours,


Prospero C. Naval, Jr., Ph.D.
DeepFish360 Project Leader