



Republic of the Philippines
Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff
PCSD Bldg., Sports Complex Rd., Bgy. Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan

September 13, 2022

RED LORMELYN E. CLAUDIO, CESO IV

Regional Executive Director

DENR MIMAROPA

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DIR. JOE AMIL M. SALINO

Regional Director

EMB MIMAROPA Region

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**SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE COASTAL ASSESSMENT
CONDUCTED AT CORON BAY RECLAMATION
PROJECT**

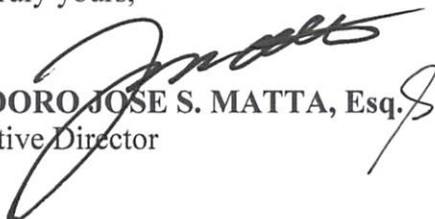
Dear RED Claudio and Dir Salino,

Last July 10-15, 2022, the PCSDS initiated to conduct a coastal assessment within the Coron Bay Reclamation Area, as well as on some areas and islands surrounding it. This was done to determine the possible environmental impact caused by this reclamation project undertaken by BCT Trading and Construction and 428 Hi-Tech Group, Inc. The said assessment was headed by the PCSD, along with representatives from the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and DENR-CENRO.

In view of the foregoing, please find the attached Back-to-Office Report (BTOR) submitted by the PCSD District Management Office Staff who conducted the coastal assessment. The said BTOR expressed in detail the findings and recommendations relative thereto.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,


TEODORO JOSE S. MATTA, Esq.
Executive Director

Copy furnished:

The NBI Regional Director

Region IV-B MIMAROPA

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INTRA-OFFICE MEMO

DATE : 13 July 2022

FOR : **ATTY. TEODORO JOSE S. MATTA** **Executive Director**

THRU : **NIÑO REY C. ESTOYA, MNSA** **Director II, Operations**
GLEND M. CADIGAL **District Manager-South**
CRISTINA D. RODRIGUEZ **District Manager-Calamianes**

FROM : **JESUS E. BREAM** **PDO III, DMO South**
MARTIN S. CALIGDONG **ITO 1, DMO South**

SUBJECT : **Back-to-Office-Report: Official Travel to Brgy. 5, Coron, Palawan on July 10 – 15, 2022 to conduct a coastal assessment on possible impacts of the reclamation done by 428 construction.**

The undersigned travelled to municipality of Coron, Palawan to investigate possible impacts caused by the reclamation done by 428 construction in Barangay 5 on the coastal habitat. The team was lead by PCSD staff, along with the Philippine Coast Guard, and a representative from the DENR (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Assessment team composed of PCG Coron, DENR-CENRO, and PCSD Staff

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Findings

A. Assessment of Siete Pecados (Station 1)

The assessment started with the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Siete Pecados, which is approximately 3.8 kilometers away from the reclamation area. The first station assessed is located on the left side of the reclamation area when facing the sea. Ocular assessment showed that the water was cloudy and that some of the coral colonies and sponges (Figure 1 below) were covered in silt. Although the coral reef is in good condition, with the continuous influx of silt, they may soon deteriorate and overgrown with algae. Based on previous dives conducted by the Philippine Coast guard personnel, Siete pecados had very clear waters and that this was his first dive where the water was hazy and cloudy.

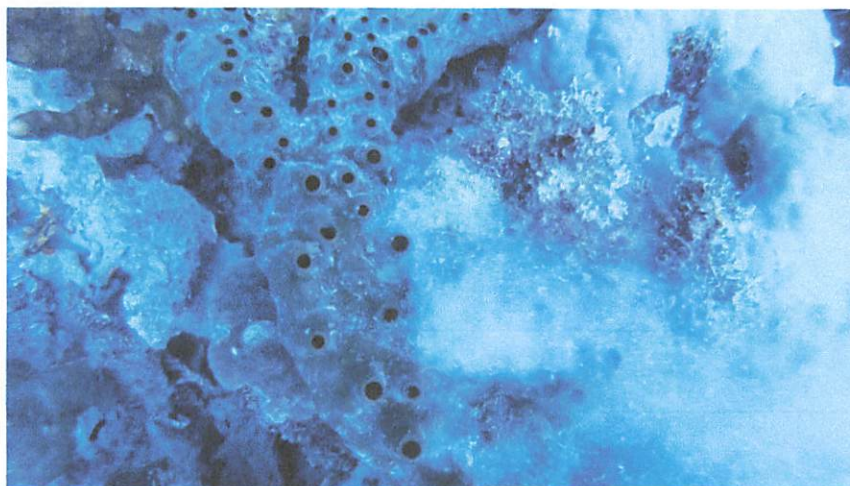


Figure 2. Sponges covered in silt.

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Figure 3. Cloudy and low visibility reef in Siete pecados.

B. Front of Discovery Island (Station 2)

The second site surveyed for siltation is Discovery Island at approximately 350 meters on the right side of the reclamation area when facing the sea. The site had very poor visibility due to siltation (Figure 3). Coral patches in the area were seen covered with silt and will most likely die in the coming days due to smothering (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Very low visibility in a mixed habitat of seagrass and coral colonies

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Figure 5. Heavily silted coral patch in front of Discovery island

C. Reclamation site (Station 3 and 4)

Two separate areas in front of the reclamation area was surveyed to determine the impacts of siltation on the coastal environment. Heavy siltation was observed in both stations, 2-3 meters away from the reclamation area (Figure 5 & 6).

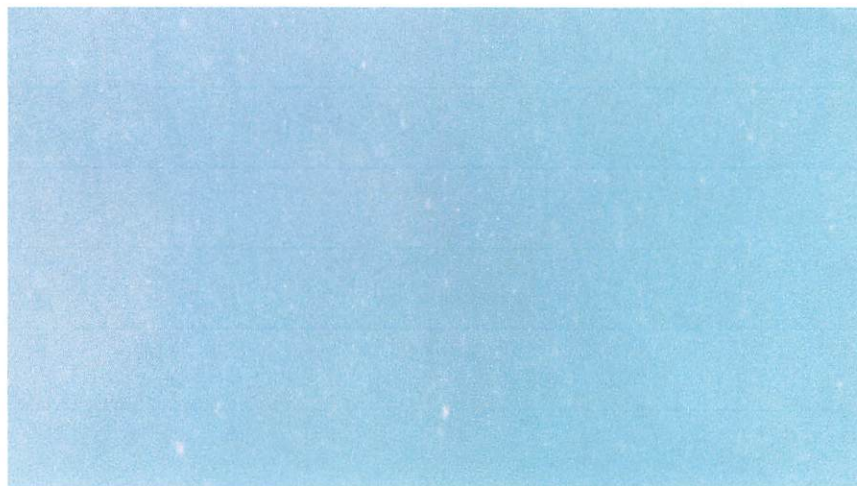


Figure 6. Suspended silt in the water column

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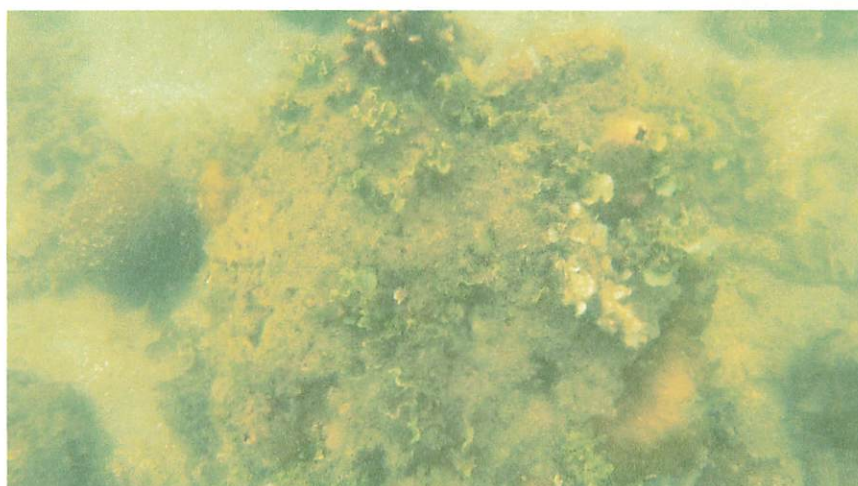


Figure 7. Heavy silt on top of coral colony slowly being overgrown with a macroalgae (*Halimeda sp.*).

B. Land use change analysis

Analysis of the changes in the area was done using satellite images to determine the total reclaimed area that was affected the mangroves and seagrass present in the area.

Table 1.

Description	2019	2021	2022
Seagrass	--	18 hectares	18 hectares
Corals	--	0.4 hectares	0.4 hectares
Reclaimed	0.20 hectares	22 hectares	22 hectares

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Figure 8. Google satellite image captured in December 2019;

A small area has been reclaimed in 2019 (Red Circle). Based on the NAMRIA Marine Habitat 2016, a large area of seagrass bed (green outline) and coral reef (pink outline) on the edge are present in the reclamation site. Based on the interview with several locals, the reclamation site used to be a good fishing ground where you can buy fresh fish from fishers. The information gathered from the interview confirms that the coastal area was originally a healthy seagrass ecosystem with patches of coral colonies which is now the reclamation site.

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Onsite Management Authority of the Palawan Biosphere Reserve

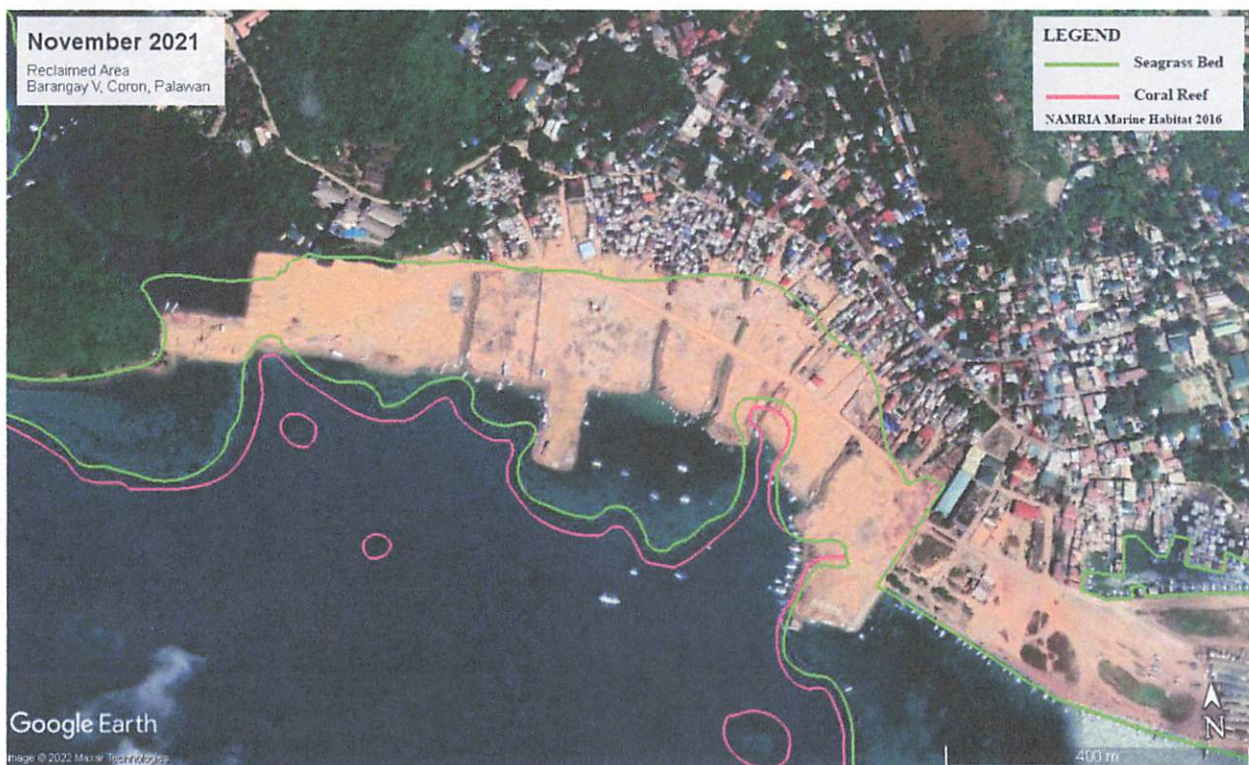


Figure 9. Google Satellite Image was captured in November 2021.

Approximately 22 hectares was reclaimed on November 2021. Based on the image, 18 hectares of seagrass, and 0.4 hectares of coral reef was covered by rocks and soil as part of the reclamation.

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RECLAIMED AREA
BARANGAY V, CORON, PALAWAN
MAY 5, 2022

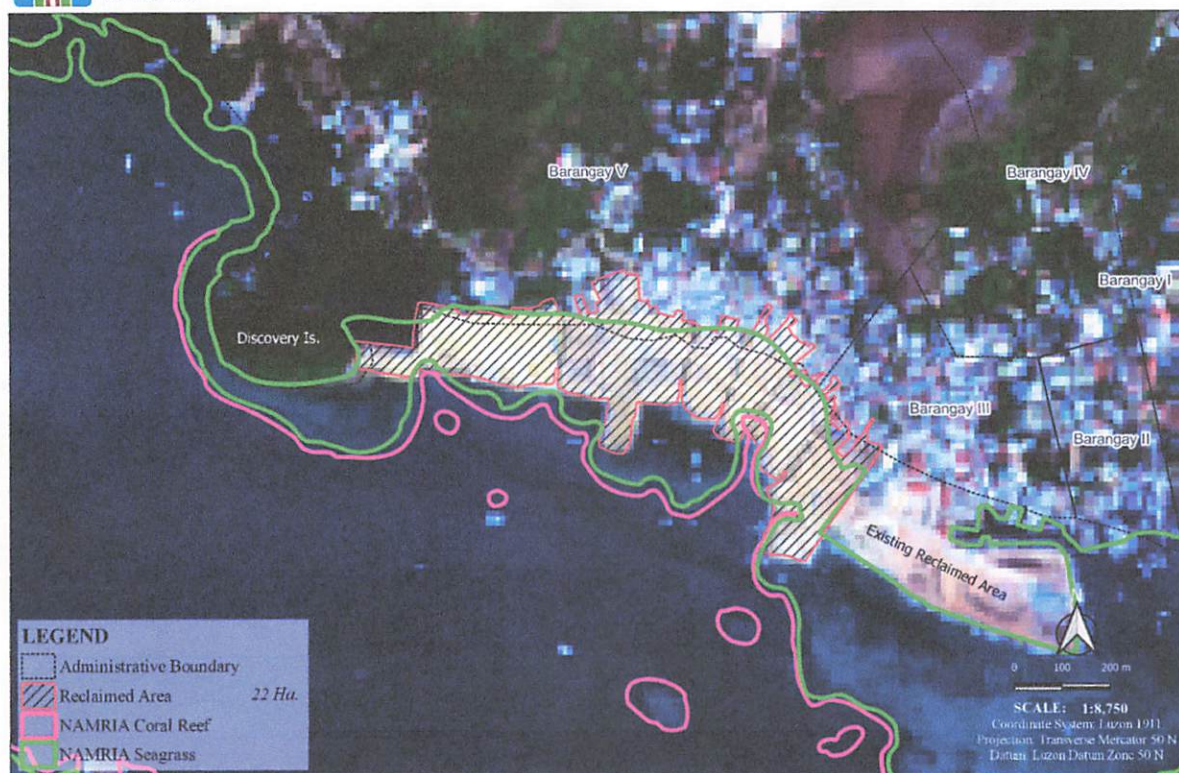


Figure 10. Sentinel 2 Satellite Image captured on May 5, 2022 in Barangay 5, Coron, Palawan.

Recent satellite image shows no expansion in the reclamation site. The image is exactly like the image captured on November 2021.

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Figure 11. Cement post left unused for the construction of the seawall

The photo above shows the cement post that will be used for the construction of the seawall surrounding the reclamation site.

Findings

1. Violation of Section 22.3 of PCSD Administrative Order No. 06, as amended and imposing appropriate penalty.

Recommendations

1. Immediate construction of the seawall surrounding the reclamation area to prevent further damage brought about by increased turbidity and siltation.
2. Issuance of a Notice of Violation (NOV) and imposition of appropriate penalties.

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