

Verde Island Passage Marine Protected Area Network and Law Enforcement Network
4th Secretariat Meeting and 3rd Management Board Meeting
April 24-25, 2023 | Hotel Pontefino, Gulod Labac, Batangas City

24 APRIL 2023		
AGENDA	HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACTIVITY AND AGREEMENTS	REMARKS
Call to Order	Mr. Augustus Rex F. Montebon, Marine Program Director of the Conservation International Philippines as the Co-Chair called the activity in order at 09:57 AM on 24 April 2023 at Hotel Pontefino, Gulod Labac, Batangas City. The meeting started with the Introduction of Participants followed by the Prayer and National Anthem.	
Participants	<p>PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES</p> <p><u>Batangas Provincial Government</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Luis Awitan, PGDH 2. Kat Paglinawan, Attorney IV 3. Evelyn L. Estigoy, PPDC 4. Lorena A. Candava, Supervising EMS <p><u>Occidental Mindoro Provincial Government</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hernan J. Alfaro, CDA-II 2. John Paul Aristotle C. Ramos, PO IV 3. Joseph Anthony T. Basa, Agri. II <p><u>Marinduque Provincial Government</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arlyn S. Jarabe OIC PEO Unit 2. Romeo G. Pangilinan, AT II <p><u>Romblon Provincial Government</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ray Angel M. De Juan, PGDH <p>NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES (NGAS)</p> <p><u>Philippine Coast Guard</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CG LTJG Mart Andrew C. Mangolare, Branch Chief, MEP LAW and Policy Branch 2. CG ASN Kristian Eli Juarez 3. Felissa Portin-Baladbad, Legislative Staff <p><u>Philippine National Police</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pat Arthur Buendia 2. PCPT Bazar Ali, Station Chief 3. PCPT Mariel L. Sanchez, C. Admin 4. Pat. Erica Eran, Asst. Admin PNCO 5. Lt.Col. Melvin Laguros, Acting Chief, RMJ 4B - PNP-MG <p><u>Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Regional Office - CALABARZON)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Catherine N. Amican, Aqua I <p>NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)</p> <p><u>Conservation International Philippines</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wilson John Barbon, CPSD 2. Augustus Rex F. Montebon, Marine Director <p>DENR REGIONAL AND FIELD OFFICES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximo C. Landrito, OIC ARD, DENR MIMAROPA 2. John Bryan Lazara, Admin Aide IV, DENR MIMAROPA 3. Michaela Rongavilla, DMO III Chief, PAMBCS, DENR MIMAROPA 4. Ma. Cecilia G. Sawit, DMO III Chief, CRFMS, DENR MIMAROPA 5. Maria Melissa L. Endangan, DMO V Chief, CDD, DENR MIMAROPA 6. Malvin R. Rocero, TSD, PENRO Romblon 7. Noel M. Recillo, OIC PENRO, PENRO Batangas 8. Wyleen G. Capito, DMO III, PENRO Batangas 9. Ma. Jeanella A. Abanilla, CEO, PENRO Batangas 	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Isagani Q. Amatorio, OIC CENRO, CENRO Calaca, Batangas 11. Imelda M. Diaz, OIC PENRO, PENRO Marinduque 12. Celso Almazan, TSD, PENRO Occidental Mindoro 13. Ernesto E. Tañada, PENRO, PENRO Occidental Mindoro 14. Alan Valle, OIC PENRO, PENRO Oriental Mindoro 15. Amor Asi, CDS Chief, PENRO Oriental Mindoro <p>DENR-BMB (SECRETARIAT)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Armida P. Andres, OIC Assistant Director In concurrent capacity as Chief, Coastal and Marine Division 2. John Erick B. Avelino, CMD 3. Pablo G. de los Reyes, Jr., CMD 4. Irish Mikee Wigwigan, CMD 5. Kim Cyrus M. Miranda, CMD 6. Amelia Abecina, CMD 7. Francisco Feliciano, NPD 8. Daniel S. Garino, Jr., NPD 9. Dan Louie B. Bernabe, CMD 	
Day 1 List of Agenda	<p>Then, Mr. Montebon presented the eight agenda as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matters Arising from the Previous Meetings; 2. Reporting of 2020-2022 Achievements based on the Strategic Management Plan & Presentation of 2023 Targets; 3. Development Projects: 4. Reconstitution of VIP MPAN LEN to include Higher Education Institutions (HEIs); 5. Conduct of the Protected Area Suitability Assessment for VIP; 6. Comprehensive spatial planning of the VIP; 7. Management interventions for disaster-proofing of VIP; and 8. Finalization of Draft Agenda/Program for the 3rd Management Board 	
Agenda 1	<p>Mr. John Erick Avelino of the DENR-BMB presented the minutes and agreements from the previous management board and secretariat meetings and emphasized the matters arising from the previous meetings. The identified matters for discussion are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include DOT as a member of the Management Board 2. Further updates on the Co-Financing Mechanism and Financial Proposals 3. Updates on the investigation of CENRO Lian on quarry and beach operations 4. Discussion of the 4 Resolutions 5. Transformation of set-up from Secretariat to TWG - inform Governors about the plan or Representatives to present to their heads 	
Open Forum	<p><u>March 2023 Updates</u></p> <p>Mr. Romeo G. Pangilinan from Marinduque Provincial Government Office inquired about the updates on the March 2023 meeting. The BMB Secretariat mentioned that the updates would be discussed in the presentation of the resolutions.</p> <p><u>Quarrying and Beach Operations</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Montebon requested updates from CENRO Lian on their investigation into quarrying. It was noted that the quarrying operation was covered by a permit from the Provincial Government of Batangas and was deemed legal according to a letter issued by MGB [Engr. Sarmiento]. It was also requested that the Provincial Government be contacted to check if the quarry is still 	

	<p>legally operating at present. It was later clarified that the quarry is still currently operating.</p> <p>2. Mr. Ray Angel M. De Juan from Romblon Provincial Government Office inquired about the basis for the approval of the permit to operate since beach quarrying is not allowed by law. He stated that the basis is important for the Romblon Province to follow. Mr. Noel M. Recillo, PENRO Batangas, pointed out that quarrying and beach operations are not the same and requested that the specific quarrying activities be presented for clarification.</p> <p><u>Members of the Management Board</u></p> <p>Mr. Recillo inquired about the creation of the Management Board, and Mr. Montebon provided a history of the MPAN-LEN.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the SMARTSeas Project of DENR in 2015-2019, a MOA was developed, which covered five key areas, namely VIP, Lanuza Bay, Davao Gulf, Tañon Strait, and Southern Palawan. CI Philippines, WWF, Haribon, Rare Philippines, and NFRDI were responsible for implementing the project in the VIP, Davao Gulf, Lanuza Bay, Tañon Strait, and Southern Palawan, respectively. - One of the developments of the project in the VIP area was the formation of an MPAN-LEN board to protect biodiversity. It was essential to identify who would manage the overall protection of the area. Previously, there were MPANs and Bantay Dagat Networks in Batangas, Oriental Mindoro, and Occidental Mindoro, but there were none in Romblon and Marinduque. Initially, the Project identified four members of the MPAN-LEN, including the Municipalities of Paluan, Abra de Ilog, Lubang, and Looc, and soon after, areas from Romblon and Marinduque were identified. - The PNP and PCG were also included for their support to law enforcement, and BFAR was included for fisheries. This is how the MPAN-LEN was formed, with nine members and signatories of the Board (MOA), including the five governors (Batangas, Marinduque, Romblon, Oriental Mindoro, and Occidental Mindoro), the Secretaries of DENR and DA-BFAR, the PNP Chief (Maritime Group), and the PCG Commandant. <p><u>Transformation of set-up from Secretariat to TWG</u></p> <p>It was agreed that BMB would draft a TOR on the functions of the TWG and present it to the body.</p>	<p>It was agreed later on that there is no need to draft TOR, and identify PAMB members instead and no need to finalize the resolutions since no definite legal bases were identified.</p>
Agenda 2	<p>Dr. Montebon discussed the Thematic Areas and Objectives prescribed in the approved Strategic Management Plan. The eight Thematic Areas include the following: 1) Sustainable Productions (fisheries and aquaculture), 2) Biodiversity Conservation, 3) Pollution, 4) Governance, Policy, and Marine Law Enforcement, 5) Socio-economics and Sustainable Financing, 6) Communications Strategy, 7) Climate Resilience, and 8) Ecotourism.</p>	<p>Dr. Montebon requested the provinces to report the status of the activities they conducted on the Thematic Areas; however, the provinces pleaded to move the presentation the next day for the finalization of presentations. The discussion proceeded with the presentation of the resolutions.</p>
Agenda 3	<p>Mr. Pablo de Los Reyes, Jr. of the DENR-BMB presented the rationale and resolution of the Development Projects within the VIP. Updates on the four projects within VIP were discussed including Converge Information and Communication Technology, DITO Telecommunity Phase 2, Globe DSCN, and Shell Pilipinas</p>	

	<p>LNG Export Facility Terminal Project. The estimated annual SAPA Fee is PhP124,000 Million which can be collected once the VIP is declared as NIPAS.</p>	
Open Forum	<p><u>Map of the DITO Project</u> Mr. Pangilinan commented that the map presented for the DITO Project is different from the one presented by the Sangguninag Bayan. BMB will verify the said map.</p> <p><u>Network or Board</u> Ms. Lorena A. Candava of the Batangas Provincial Government Office inquired about the legal basis in the drafting of the resolutions and the statement in the MOA regarding the creation of a network and not a management board.</p> <p>The following legal bases were identified for the Resolutions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> MOA Executive Order 578 ENIPAS Law <p>Mr. Wilson John Barbon of the CI Philippines and Ms. Fame of PCG shared their knowledge on drafting MOAs. They identified the following legal bases for consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ordinances Another Executive Order Supplemental MOA <p><u>Collection of SAPA Fees</u> Ms. Neneng Andres, OIC Assistant Director of BMB, opened the discussion on the computation of SAPA Fees. This topic raised inquiries on PAMB and PASA.</p> <p>Mr. Recillo reiterated that the MOA is not a law but an agreement between parties, so the collection of fees is not allowed unless the VIP is declared as a protected area. He further said that the resolutions should not transpire since the collection of fees is involved.</p> <p><u>VIP as Initial Component</u> Ms. Andres mentioned the interpretation and opinion of the Provincial Legal Officers that VIP is an initial component and can impose its own fees and create its own PAMB. She also mentioned that there are House Bills on VIP.</p> <p>Ms. Amor Asi of PENRO Oriental Mindoro said that if VIP is an initial component, then the current Board is incomplete. Ms. Andres explained that there is an interim PAMB and sub-PAMBs for large PAs.</p> <p>Mr. Malvin R. Rocero, of PENRO Romblon, has agreed to adhere to ENIPAS. He said that the members of the board have already been identified hoping that the majority of them will be present at the next day's meeting. Mr. Rocero further explained that the soft PAMB is referred to as the executive committee, which represents the entire PAMB. This committee can represent the whole body in conducting meetings, adoption, and ratification of decisions through a PAMB resolution. The process involves the creation of PASA, which includes the formulation of a management plan, operational plan, and zoning. If the PAMB is complete and a majority decision is reached, all resolutions, including fee collection, will be cleared.</p> <p>Mr. Montebon summarized the discussion, reiterating that the network is solely a network and not a council. He inquired whether</p>	<p>After thorough verification, it was found that segment 2.3 (Sta. Cruz, Marinduque - Magdiwan, Romblon is in another file. The map in Segment 2.2 was the only 1 presented)</p>

	<p>the body proposed the VIP to transition to ENIPAS as an initial component, with the proposed existing management board serving as the PAMB.</p> <p><u>Chair of the PAMB</u></p> <p>Since two regions are involved, the Chair of the PAMB was discussed. Some DENR Field Offices said that the Secretary is the Chair but upon checking the ENIPAS, the area with the largest area would Chair the PAMB. It was further said that the total area is the basis, not the number of provinces.</p> <p><u>Comments of the Provinces</u></p> <p>Mr. Montebon asked for the comments of the Provincial Offices on the discussion of VIP as a protected area. The comments of the representatives were as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Occidental Mindoro - they said that they would go with the flow as the discussion is technical and not familiar with NIPAS. Marinduque - no comment Batangas - Ms. Candava said that the transition of VIP to PAMB is somewhat negative for Batangas based on the consolidated position papers of the LGUs. She further said that the Governor will explain tomorrow's session. Romblon - Mr. De Juan approves the creation of PAMB because of their experience with Mount Guiting-Guiting. 	
Revised Day 1 Agenda	<p>The body agreed to revise the agenda since the supposed resolutions to be presented will be retracted. The revised agenda was as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Matters Arising from the Previous Meetings; Development Projects; Orientation on the NIPAS process; Establishment of VIP as a PA under the NIPAS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Status of the Protected Area Suitability Assessment for VIP; Management interventions for disaster-proofing of VIP; Other Matters; and Finalization of Draft Agenda/Program for the 3rd Management Board. 	
New Agenda 3	<p>Mr. Dan Garino of BMB-NPD presented the NIPAS process as per the request of the body since it was mentioned that some personnel of the Provincial Offices were not aware.</p>	
Open Forum	<p><u>Consideration of Alternative Environmental Management Strategies aside from ENIPAS</u></p> <p>Ms. Evelyn L. Estigoy, of the Batangas Provincial Government Office, posed a question to the body regarding the exclusive pursuit of the ENIPAS arrangement or the consideration of alternative modes for managing the area. She proceeded to elaborate on the strategies that have already been implemented in Batangas Province, highlighting that in addition to ENIPAS, there exist other approaches. The presentation on ENIPAS revealed that there is area-based conservation which has been in effect since the implementation of the local government code, leading to significant devolution and decentralization of functions such as environment and natural resources management, fisheries, and related services for biodiversity conservation. As a result, the involvement of Local Government Units (LGUs) in biodiversity conservation has been substantial.</p> <p>Notably, Batangas Province embarked on a comprehensive implementation of Integrated Coastal Management as early as 2006, serving as a demonstration site in East Asia with support from the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations, and</p>	

other organizations under the project of the DENR. Among 26 countries, Batangas Province was chosen as a demonstration site for marine pollution prevention and management, beginning with Batangas Bay and expanding to encompass other areas and bays. This achievement laid the foundation for Executive Order 533, which embraced Integrated Coastal Management as a pivotal strategy for biodiversity conservation. Subsequently, former President Arroyo issued EO 578, establishing a national policy on ecological biodiversity that prescribed its implementation throughout the country, with particular emphasis on the Sulu-Sulawesi marine ecosystem and VIP.

Since then, in parallel with the full implementation of the local government code, efforts to localize biodiversity conservation management have been ongoing. Within the context of the PASA, a new research activity will be undertaken again considering that the presence of capacity buildings, institutionalizations of environmental management and protection, and the responsibilities of national agencies were already in place. In Batangas, the decision was made to establish the Provincial Government Environment and Natural Resources Office, including offices in cities and municipalities, to assume the role of environmental protection and management as stipulated in the local government code. Recently, former President Duterte issued EO 138, which called for devolution, and Batangas Province was among those that prepared transition plans accordingly.

Ms. Estigoy further emphasized the importance of considering alternative approaches alongside ENIPAS, given that existing laws such as RA11038, RA 7586, and RA 7160 already provide the necessary financing and responsibilities. This raises the question of whether there is a need to pursue ENIPAS for the purpose of decentralization and returning to previous arrangements. Notably, the current Governor is advocating for the implementation of the Mandanas Ruling, which entails utilizing the share in national wealth at the local level for fisheries and environmental management. This approach would enable all LGUs to partake in interventions promptly, with access to appropriate funding and manpower resources.

Balance Between People and Nature

Mr. Barbon acknowledged that the Province is already undergoing development, while another body is introducing additional regulations, even if there are existing ones in place. The implementation of ENIPAS will further complicate the approval process.

The position of the CI is to strive for a balanced approach between human activities and the preservation of nature. The purpose of the discussion is to ensure that as we develop our provinces, we establish sufficient mechanisms to protect nature, rather than addressing problems and challenges after development has taken place, which often proves insufficient for nature conservation. Achieving this balance may be accomplished through the implementation of NIPAS or other suitable approaches. It comes down to whether the body genuinely desires to protect nature. Development can bring forth additional resources and investments for nature, but only if appropriate actions are taken. It is crucial to have systems, mechanisms, and policies in place to achieve this goal. Mr. Barbon firmly believes that this is the overarching goal that the body should strive to achieve and explore.

Contribution of DENR to the Protection of VIP - Declare VIP as a Protected Area

	<p>Ms. Asi emphasized the DENR's proposal to convert VIP into a protected area, particularly considering the existence of Executive Order 578. Through years of managing the VIP, it has become apparent that the site currently operates as an open-access zone, allowing unrestricted activities. However, sacrifices must be made to ensure the protection and regulation of the VIP. This entails implementing policies and establishing regulatory measures. The primary objective is to conserve and develop the VIP. Ms. Asi reiterated that the VIP holds great significance as the center of the center, recognized globally. Currently, declaring the VIP as a protected area seems to be the most practical and effective solution to protect VIP.</p> <p><u>Holistic Approach in Protecting VIP</u></p> <p>Ms. Imelda M. Diaz, PENRO Marinduque, appreciated the Province of Batangas for raising their concerns from the perspective of the LGU. She recognizes the ongoing Mandanas Ruling but emphasizes the need for a holistic approach. There is already a law that can serve as the foundation for establishing the protected area. The VIP holds both international and national significance, and its scope should not be underestimated. It requires a collective and unified effort, taking into account the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved. This is not solely about the role of each office, but rather about protecting a vast area that requires the collective efforts of all parties involved.</p> <p>Ms. Andres acknowledged all the facts presented and the opinions of the attendees. She said that the NIPAS Law itself recognizes the management regimes under LGUs and indigenous people, as stated in the preamble of the act. While it is a new provision in the law and lacks operational mechanisms, insights can be drawn from local conservation areas and indigenous community conservation efforts. There is currently no policy that perfectly aligns with the provisions of the NIPAS Law and the OECM concept. However, one provision of the ENIPAS Act recognizes the areas managed by LGUs. Ms. Andres fully acknowledges the contribution of Batangas Province in advancing Integrated Coastal Management (ICM). Taking a holistic approach is crucial when considering the connectivity studies conducted in the VIP. It is important to establish clear coordination from January to December to ensure that zoning for protection and multiple-use areas are harmonized and interconnected.</p> <p>She further said that the main problem lies in the absence of a concrete policy for this matter. There is a lack of policy specifying the scope of coverage. It is necessary to identify the provisions within the NIPAS Law that can be tapped to recognize this specific management regime. Currently, we are still in the initial stages, and a team has recently been organized at the BMB and DENR, along with other government agencies, to work on this recognition called OECM. The contributions of local actors, particularly LGUs, in implementing a national system of integrated protected areas for the country are highly regarded. The inputs of LGUs are well recognized and will be further enhanced with the Mandanas Ruling. When approaching a large protected area like VIP, it is important to consider how to break down the management structure to ensure effective implementation on the ground.</p>	
New Agenda 6	<p>Mr. Montebon presented the summary of agreements/recommendations of the DENR and Provincial Legal Officers as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pursuant to Section 5 Republic Act No. 11038 or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (ENIPAS) Act of 2018, VIP is already a Protected Area by virtue of Executive Order No. 578; 	

	<p>2. The establishment of PAMB as a step towards imposition and collection of users' fees that shall be used for conservation and management of VIP and for sustainable financing in general, and</p> <p>3. Apart from the above users' fees, the Local Government Units (LGUs) shall continue its power to levy taxes and fees from the development projects in accordance with the Local Government Code.</p>	
Open Forum	<p><u>Batangas Experience with Taal Volcano Protected Landscape (TVPL)</u></p> <p>Ms. Kat Paglinawan, an attorney from the Batangas Province, raised concerns regarding the absence of fees or profits being submitted to the province since the declaration of Taal Volcano as a protected landscape. The imposition of taxes is also being questioned, and the Batangas Province has limited influence over development projects.</p> <p>Ms. Estigoy further said that in terms of environmental protection and the restoration of the area, regulatory practices have posed challenges. Not only does the province not receive financial compensation, but it is also expected to provide funds in certain cases. An example is the issue of fish cages, where the carrying capacity of TVPL should be considered. However, the delineation of 500 fish cages depends on the status of Taal Volcano. Problems arise when there is overfeeding or lack of permits, leading to abandoned fish cages that should be removed. Unfortunately, since there are no funds allocated specifically for this purpose, the burden falls on the Province instead of being covered by the IPAF (Integrated Protected Areas Fund). Even government projects and developments are subject to fees.</p> <p>Ms. Wyleen G. Capito of PENRO Batangas responded to the statement regarding the absence of fees for the demolition of fish cages by pointing out that the government has allocated 5 million pesos for this purpose, indicating that there are funds available. As for the fees being imposed, these discussions take place during the PAMB (Protected Area Management Board) meetings, where LGUs are members. The DENR serves only as the secretariat for the PAMB.</p> <p><u>Property Taxes on VIP and ICM Matters</u></p> <p>Ms. Estigoy mentioned that LGUs are prohibited from imposing real property tax on the Taal Volcano Protected Landscape (TVPL).</p> <p>Ms. Andres shared with the attendees that Senator Villar has proposed a bill specifically for the establishment of protected seascape areas within the VIP. Since the proposed areas primarily consist of marine waters with no land, property taxes are not applicable to the seascape. She expressed her hope that an ICM approach would be implemented by the respective municipalities to address the land aspect and provide additional protection measures for the coastal areas and marine waters. The decision regarding this matter lies with the governing body. The Tanon Strait serves as a notable example, as it is the largest protected seascape and has been successful in generating resources for its protection and management.</p> <p>Ms. Estigoy explained that the essence of environmental law lies in the ridge-to-reef approach. In addition to land use plans and zoning, there is a need for a water _ scheme to ensure consistency and harmony in water use zonation and zoning among municipalities and LGUs. It is crucial to prevent land-based pollution that could harm the fragile and vital</p>	<p>The body requested the compiled minutes of meetings of all the meetings conducted regarding VIP.</p>

	ecosystem of the VIP. Existing water zonation measures are in place to address these concerns.	
New Agenda 4	Mr. Avelino presented the Status of the Protected Area Suitability Assessment for VIP.	
Open Forum	<p><u>Data on Overfishing in the Municipality of Lubang</u> Mr. Joseph Anthony T. Basa from the Occidental Mindoro Provincial Government Office raised a question regarding the presentation of data on overfishing to the Municipality of Lubang. As a resident of the area, he personally observed that fishing practices in Lubang are sustainable and that the Municipality enforces strict regulations for fisherfolks. He expressed his confusion as to why overfishing is still being reported, considering what he has witnessed. He speculated that perhaps there are certain parameters and mechanisms used to gather overfishing data that he is unaware of. Mr. Basa emphasized the importance of presenting this data to the Municipality and BFAR to raise awareness. Mr. Avelino said that they will validate the data from the final report of the SMARTSeas Project.</p> <p><u>Submission of PASA Report</u> Ms. Asi raised her concerns regarding the extension of the completion of the Protected Area Suitability Assessment (PASA). According to the Work and Financial Plan, the completion date was originally set for April. However, due to the lack of available funds, the PASA cannot be completed as scheduled. She requested a document from the Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) stating that the submission date will be moved to a later date or that an extension will be granted. She expressed that the extension will not be set for June, as there are no funds available, and it would not be feasible to complete the data by that time.</p> <p>Ms. Neneng assured that the concerns raised by the PENROs will be included in the report of this consultation meeting, which will be presented to the Secretary. However, she noted that there is a possibility that the discussion in Congress may proceed, as it has already been filed. The Congress will likely inquire about the results of the PASA. If the report is not presented, the status of the discussion will be put on hold (abeyance) and will not be scheduled. Ms. Andres urged the PENROs to express their apprehension regarding the challenges of submitting the report, particularly due to the ongoing efforts to address the impact of the oil spill. She emphasized that the Secretary had instructed them to complete the report, but if it is not possible, they should explain the situation to her in the hope that she will understand.</p> <p>Ms. Diaz reiterated her request for the BMB to provide an official document that grants an extension for the submission of the PASA. She emphasized that the planning officers of PENRO Marinduque strictly require an official document to support the extension. Additionally, she presented the preliminary results of their PASA report.</p>	
New Agenda 5	Mr. Avelino presented the resolution regarding the Management interventions for disaster-proofing of VIP.	The detailed rationale for this was presented the next day.
New Agenda 6	The body reviewed and finalized the agenda for the following day, reaching a consensus.	
End of Meeting	The meeting ended at 5:02 PM. A debriefing was called on 7:36 PM and ended at 8:20 PM.	

25 APRIL 2023

AGENDA	HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACTIVITY AND AGREEMENTS	REMARKS
Additional Participants	<p><u>Batangas Provincial Government</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gov. Hermilando I. Mandanas <p><u>Marinduque Provincial Government</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gov. Presbitero J. Velasco Jr. <p><u>DENR Cenro Lipa, Batangas</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allan Willard M. Estillo, CENRO 2. Charlene Jovanne Constantino, EMS I 3. Josefa M. Lozada, Sr. EMS <p><u>Biodiversity Management Bureau</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marcial C. Amaro Jr. 2. Theresa M. Tenazas <p><u>Department of Tourism</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EnP. Mario Daga <p><u>Philippine Coast Guard</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carlos King, PCPT OPG 2. Rudy Mercado, EA OVG <p><u>Philippine Information Office</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arnold M. Tabares, Jr., Admin Asst 2. Jenny Aguilera, SAO 3. Enrico Arellano, Admin Asst <p><u>Sanggunian Panlalawigan of SP OVG</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nelson Bayani, Secretary 	
Call to Order	<p>Governor Hermilando I. Mandanas as Chair, Assistant Secretary (ASec) Marcial C. Amaro Jr. as Co-Chair, and Governor Presbitero J. Velasco Jr. as Supporting Chair.</p> <p>Mr. Avelino facilitated the preliminaries of the meeting including the introduction of participants, opening prayer, and national anthem.</p> <p>The meeting was called to order by the Chair - Gov. Mandanas by opening the floor for review and adoption of the agenda. The meeting started at 9:15 AM.</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas provided a brief background of the VIP.</p>	
Opening Message	<p>DENR Secretary Yulo Loyzaga graced her presence thru Zoom Online Platform. She welcomed the members of the board then proceeded with the history of the management of VIP starting from the EO 578 and the meetings conducted through the years.</p> <p>She said that recognizing the presence of a strategic management plan for the VIP that aims to tackle various issues and concerns in the region, it is essential to explore ways to enhance the financial stability of the VIP, particularly in facilitating joint activities and inter-province initiatives.</p> <p>During the previous secretariat meeting, discussions were held to address concerns regarding the financing of VIP management. The focus was on determining the best approaches to safeguard the VIP as a whole, whether through the NIPAS framework or local management, as well as the development of a disaster response plan specific to the VIP.</p> <p>In this meeting, anticipation arises for further insights and collective charting of the path forward, considering these aspects and ensuring the sustainable management of the VIP.</p> <p>Since the early part of 2020, just before the pandemic, there have been several proposed development projects, including</p>	

	<p>submarine cable/pipe laying and jetty construction, planned within the globally significant VIP. Given this situation, it falls upon the VIP Management Board to carefully examine these projects and evaluate their impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services in the VIP. The board needs to engage in discussions and establish appropriate regulations to ensure a balance between development and conservation.</p> <p>As the VIP Management Board, it is imperative to deliberate on these matters and consider their environmental and economic implications. The focus should be on operationalizing these endeavors in a manner that fosters a harmonious coexistence between development and conservation.</p> <p>This provides an opportunity to collectively explore synergies in the strategies and potential of individual provinces and come together for the protection of this vital body of water. It is not only significant for the country but also for the rest of the world.</p>	
Day 2 List of Agenda	<p>Then, the following agenda was agreed upon as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and Adoption of the Minutes of the 2nd Management Board Meeting; 2. Matters Arising from the Previous Meetings; 3. Presentation of consolidated 2020-2022 Achievements based on the Strategic Management Plan and Presentation of 2023 Targets; 4. Discussion on the Development of a VIP-wide Disaster Prevention and Response Plan; 5. VIP Ways Forward: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. NIPAS track using the legal opinion of the DENR and Provincial Government Legal Officers; b. LGU track capitalizing on policies (i.e., Local Government Code, Mandanas Ruling, and Local Policies/Ordinances); c. Presentation of Senate and House Bills pertaining to the VIP (HB 916, HB 2729, and SB 518) 6. Other Matters 7. Summary and Agreement 	
Agenda 1	<p><u>Review and Adoption of the Minutes of the 2nd Management Board Meeting</u></p> <p>Mr. de los Reyes of BMB presented the proceedings of the 2nd Manage Board Meeting. He said that the proceedings encompassed significant milestones, including the constituting the permanent members of the Secretariat, establishing the inclusive terrestrial and marine areas of the VIP, CI-Philippines was included as permanent member of the Management Board, the finalization of the VIP Strategic Management Plan, and increased presence of PNP Maritime Group in the VIP, among others.</p>	
Open Forum	<p><u>Copies of the Minutes of Meetings of the Board Meetings</u></p> <p>Gov. Velasco requested a copy of the first and second Board Meeting minutes for their review.</p> <p><u>Legal Basis of the Network</u></p> <p>Gov. Mandanas raised a concern about the legal basis for the creation of the network.</p> <p>ASec Amaro assured that copies of the important documents would be provided. He mentioned that there is a MOA signed by the five provinces, but the issue is that it was not notarized. He also pointed out that Gov. Mandanas was one of the signatories of the MOA.</p> <p>Gov. Velasco mentioned EO 578, which was issued and could</p>	<p>Minutes of the meeting and other necessary documents should be provided one week before the next secretariat/ management board meeting. Printed copies are preferred.</p>

	<p>serve as a legal basis for the establishment of the network.</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas explained that the MOA was not notarized due to the absence of a Sangguniang Panlalawigan Resolution. He requested the secretariat (DENR) to research the executive order that declares the entire area as a marine sanctuary.</p>	
Agenda 2	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This agenda was skipped but a brief background of this was presented by DENR Secretary Loyzaga in her opening message. 	skipped
Agenda 3	Mr. Avelino discussed the presentation of consolidated 2020-2022 Achievements based on the Strategic Management Plan and Presentation of 2023 Targets.	
Open Forum	No comments were raised.	
Agenda 4	Ms. Andres then proceeded to the Discussion on the Development of a VIP-wide Disaster Prevention and Response Plan.	
Open Forum	<p><u>Updates on the Situation of the Oil Spill</u></p> <p>Mr. Barbon - Our natural resources and the people are at risk. Provision of insurance in terms of destruction of natural resources. Readiness of the network. Making sure not to make the same mistake [oil spill].</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - Requested for the updates/situation and possible solutions to be implemented of oil spill from the PCG present in the meeting.</p> <p>PCG - Continuous implementation of the **Oil Spill Plan** of PCG. OPFMC Fund, RA9843, immediate release of fund did not happen, very limited assets. Report will be provided.</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - VIP is already affected with oil spill, he inquired on the process of collecting oil in the water, he requested for the process that the provinces can help with</p> <p>PCG - use of bagging materials and siphoning</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - mentioned different materials of the spill boom. Funds should have been requested to the provinces and fundraising, requested for figure [price]. Inquired on the comments of the experts</p> <p>PCG - will take note and provide report</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas - appreciates the concern of the Gov. Velasco on oil spill then proceeded with the other topic</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas - stated that they should not be part of the protected area. There are already existing laws for the protection of the VIP and no need for another law. MOA was not approved by Sangguniang Resolutions. Separate meeting for oil spill preferably next week.</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - source of funds of oil spill</p> <p>PCG - bureau of treasury</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - urge the bureau of treasury to release the funds immediately</p> <p>Romblon - inquired on the materials used in stopping oil spill</p>	

	<p>PCG - agreed with the meeting next week and asked for the date</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas - DENR to study available funds</p> <p>Co-chair - solicit donations/contributions from the provinces either in kind or in cash</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas - does not acknowledge the network/board or MOA</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - the board exists legally as per EO 578 and 533</p>	
Agenda 5	Mr. Garin presented the salient features of NIPAS.	Chair - Gov. Mandanas requested for the salient features of NIPAS.
Open Forum	<p>Gov. Mandanas - inquired if the EO 578 automatically consider VIP as legal determined NIPAS</p> <p>Atty. Tenazas - she agreed that VIP is already an initial component</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas - he said that since VIP is an initial component then there should be no more discussion</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - explained the limitations of the EO</p> <p>Gov. Mandanas - does NIPAS operate with or without PAMB</p> <p>Asec. Amaro - the body agreed that VIP is an initial component, it will go through the process before being a full pledge protected area. It requires PASA. MOA as a transition for interim PAMB.</p> <p>Gov. Velasco - organize PAMB, suggested for DENR to issue notice to convene and elect, call for an organizational meeting</p>	
End of Meeting	The meeting ended at 12 NN. A debriefing was called on 1:30 PM and ended at 2 PM.	

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