

**[DENR ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2013-12,
February 25, 2013]**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE
CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEMS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (SCREMP)**

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Law; sections 4 and 5 of Executive Order No. 192, Series of 1987 or the Reorganization Act of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources; and consistent with Executive Order No. 533, Series of 2006 or "Adopting the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Strategy to Ensure the Sustainable Development of the Country's Coastal and Marine Environment and Resources and Establishing Supporting Mechanisms", and Executive Order No. 797, Series of 2009 or "Adopting the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) National Plan of Action (NPOA) as the Primary Framework for the Development and Implementation of all related Plans and Programs on Marine and Coastal Resources Management in the country"; the following guidelines are hereby issued:

SECTION 1. Objectives. The Sustainable Coral Reef Ecosystems Management Program (SCREMP) aims to:

1. Implement sustainable management of coastal and marine resources through resource and habitat conservation, protection and rehabilitation;
2. Contribute to food security and improve human well-being of the coastal communities;
3. Promote public awareness, and instill social and environmental consciousness on the value of coral reefs and associated coastal and marine ecosystems, especially on mitigating the effects of climate change;
4. Enhance the formation of positive values among the youth and other partners through shared responsibilities in sustainable management of coastal and marine resources and habitats; and
5. Develop sustainable financing mechanisms through the establishment of system of payment for ecosystem services.

SECTION 2. Scope and Coverage. This guideline shall be implemented in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) under the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) nationwide, within locally-managed Marine Protected Areas (LMMPAs), and identified marine Key Biodiversity Areas (MKBAs) with potential for establishment as MPAs.

SECTION 3. Definition of Terms: For purposes of this guideline, the following definition of terms shall be used:

- a. Artificial reef structures - are man-made structures typically built to provide artificial shelter for marine organisms, as well as, to provide hard surfaces for attachment for benthic organisms such as coral polyps.

- b. Corals - are colonies of identical marine animals belonging to *Phylum Cnidaria* that includes the important reef builders that inhabit the tropical oceans.
- c. Coral reefs - are diverse underwater ecosystems built from calcium carbonate secreted by corals. Coral reefs can be categorized into the following coral cover estimate thru line intercept transect method:
 - 1. Category 1 - Poor (coral reef with > 0 to 10% coral cover)
 - 2. Category 2 - Fair (coral reef with 11 - 30% coral cover)
 - 3. Category 3 - Good (coral reef with 31-50% coral cover)
 - 4. Category 4 - Very Good (coral reef with 51-75% coral cover)
 - 5. Category 5 - Excellent - (Coral reef with 76-100% coral reef cover)
- d. Integrated Information Management System - a comprehensive and integrated system of collecting information and analyzing the information for management planning and reporting.
- e. Marine Key Biodiversity Areas (mKBAs) - globally significant marine sites for biodiversity conservation used by government, donors, NGOs, the private sector, and other stakeholders, as a tool for expanding protected area network, and for targeting conservation action on the ground.

SECTION 4. Sustainable Coral Reef Ecosystems Management Program or SCREMP. This is a DENR's national program (2012-2020) that will conduct a strategic, sustainable, and ecosystem-based approach in protecting and rehabilitating coral reef ecosystems within the country through the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) - Coastal and Marine Management Office (CMMO).

SECTION 5. Program Components. The sustainable management of coral reef ecosystem shall be implemented in partnership with the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR), other concerned national government agencies, local government units, research and academic institutions, duly organized and registered People's Organizations, and the private sector through the following program components.

5.1 Habitat and Vulnerability Assessments

The habitat and vulnerability assessment component shall be conducted based on acceptable scientific procedures, as used by academic institutions, such as, the University of the Philippines - Marine Science Institute (UP-MSI) and Silliman University. The assessment shall involve the following activities:

- 5.1.1 Resource assessment of all coral reef areas which include the identification of factors or threats affecting the coral reef ecosystem, whether land- or marine-based;
- 5.1.2 Mapping and delineation of boundaries of the coral reef ecosystems including rehabilitation and protection sites using GPS and map generation consistent with the geo-reference of NAMRIA.
- 5.1.3 Marking of delineated boundaries of coral reef ecosystems with appropriate buoys and markers.
- 5.1.4 Establishment and management of database on coral reef ecosystems both in healthy and degraded condition including those areas for rehabilitation, protection, and management

adopting the Integrated Information Management System (IIMS) in coastal and marine environment.

5.1.5 Based on the results of the resource, habitat and vulnerability assessments, a coral reef ecosystems management plan shall be prepared by concerned field offices. The plan shall be consistent with existing MPA management plan and ICM Plan and shall include coral reef protection and rehabilitation measures.

5.1.6 The abovementioned activities will require appropriate technical diving skills from the field implementers. As such, SCUBA diving training courses shall be implemented in preparation for SCREMP implementation.

5.2 Coral Reef Rehabilitation and Protection

The rehabilitation and protection of coral reefs shall include the following activities:

- a) Survey of the identified poor, fair, good, very good and excellent coral reef ecosystem.
- b) Establishment of protection measures on coral reef ecosystem such as floating monitoring sites, regular patrols, and other similar activities;
- c) Implementation of rehabilitation measures, such as, stock enhancement of marine species, deployment of appropriate artificial reef structures, etc.
- d) Regular documentation and reporting on the implementing of the management, protection and rehabilitation of coral reef ecosystems.
- e) Implementation of UNEP-initiated project called "Green Fins Code of Conduct" on Responsible Diving and other science-based information and technologies for coral reef protection and rehabilitation.
- f) Conduct of maintenance and reporting, monitoring, and evaluation of the protection and rehabilitation measures implemented.

5.3 Social Mobilization and Development

The social mobilization component shall involve the conduct of information, education and communication campaigns to increase awareness and promote appreciation on the importance of the coastal and marine environment particularly, the coral reef habitat and ecosystems.

This component shall also include technical and organizational capability-building activities for partner POs and NGOs geared towards the attainment of SCREMP's goals and objectives.

5.4 Marine Protected Area (MPAs) Establishment, Strengthening and Networking

This component shall involve the establishment, strengthening, and networking of MPAs in collaboration with concerned stakeholders. This will cover capacity building, management planning, and implementation