



save tañon strait

CITIZENS' MOVEMENT

Tañon saga

A GUIDEBOOK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM AND EMPOWERMENT

TAÑON SAGA:
A GUIDEBOOK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM & EMPOWERMENT

Printed 2013

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Foreword

Globalization and opening up of the market economy that has allowed national and transnational companies to expropriate a country's natural and economic resources, is causing misery and despair to people the world over. In the name of development, lands belonging to small food producers are being acquired through legal and illegal means; governments are selling off water resources to private companies which are building dams over them or simply cornering the water and resources within; reckless mining is stripping land and hillsides – and all this for private corporate profits. This is happening almost everywhere, and communities of small food producers, fishers, cattle keepers, pastoralists are increasingly and relentlessly getting pushed into poverty and hunger.

Over the last several years, the Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PANAP) has been conducting international fact-finding missions (FFM) to document the threats on ground to people's food sovereignty, and to provide support to their struggles against such threats. One such FFM was to the Central Visayas region in the Philippines to investigate the destruction of the local fisherfolk's tenure and food security as a result of off-shore oil and gas explorations by foreign companies. The fisherfolk's fish-catch in the region, one of the richest fishing grounds in Central Philippines and considered a global center for marine biodiversity, had severely dwindled during this period. In fact, Tañon Strait, the major location for the explorations, was a declared protected area. The explorations were also generating

toxic wastes and pollutants which were destroying the area's marine environment.

PAN AP is happy to have conducted this FFM which also helped galvanize the people – not just the local fisherfolk – to unite for a joint struggle. The struggle later evolved into the setting up of the “Save Tañon Strait Citizens’ Movement” (STSCM) — a broad regional alliance of fisherfolk, environmentalists, students, scientists, lawyers and other professionals.

As a result of the STSCM's struggle, the exploration work was suspended, and one of the foreign companies involved left the area. However, the said company has since found a back-door re-entry, and the case of this off-shore oil and gas exploration is now for the Supreme Court in the Philippines to decide. But we already feel very encouraged about the people's struggle there – that people from a wide spectrum of society have come together to make common cause, raise awareness and challenge the government's policy and actions. We deem this strengthening of people's unity, which has since gone beyond saving of the Tañon Strait to encompass the threat against the whole Visayan Sea and demand congressional investigation and intervention, a major success. The struggle has also resulted in the creation and strengthening of local fisherfolk, where they are taking lead in organizing activities, dialogues with the local governments, and organizing public fora, pickets, and mass actions. Of course, these struggles have invariably also attracted people's harassment by state authorities, but the people are continuing to ask questions and others have come forward in support of them.

As such, this booklet is a very important document which not only records the various milestones in the people's struggle in the Tañon Strait saga, but provides major learning and inspiration for any future work on people's movement to save their environment, livelihoods and lives.

We hope that governments of the world, particularly the developing countries, will realize that such ‘development’ projects as in the Tañon Strait in the Philippines do not lead to economic prosperity, sustainable development and larger benefit but only bring about majority people's impoverishment and misery.

Sarojeni Rengam
Executive Director
PAN AP

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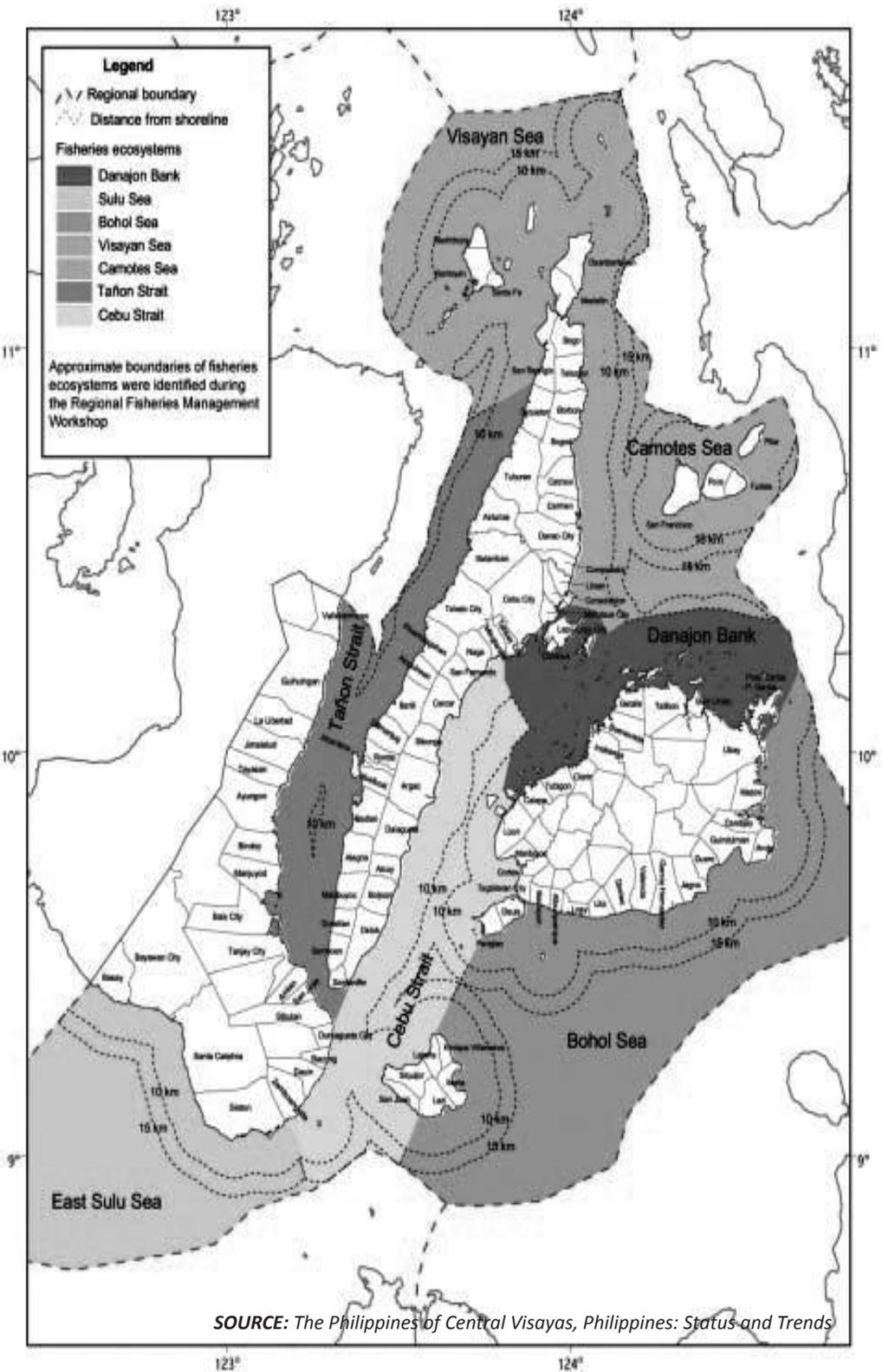
List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

BAYAN	Bagong Alyansang Makabayan	PAMALAKAYA	Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas
BFAR	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources	PAMANA Sugbo	Panaghugpong sa mga Gagmayng Mananagat sa Sugbo
CCCI	Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry	PCFS	People’s Coalition on Food Sovereignty
CNU	Cebu Normal University	PAN AP	Pesticide Action Network Asia-Pacific
CEC	Center for Environmental Concerns Philippines, Inc.	PAMS	Philippine Association of Marine Scientists
FARDEC	Central Visayas Farmers Development Center, Inc.	PAMB	Protected Area Management Board
FIDEC	Central Visayas Fisherfolk Development Center, Inc.	STSCM	Save Tañon Strait Citizens’ Movement
CCEF	Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation, Inc.	TSPS	Tañon Strait Protected Seascape
CRMP	Coastal Resource Management Project	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
DOE	Department of Energy	UC	University of Cebu
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources	USC	University of San Carlos
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	USJR	University of San Jose-Recoletos
EIM	Environmental Investigative Mission	UP	University of the Philippines
ELAC	Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Inc.		
FFM	Fact-finding Mission		
FPE	Foundation for the Philippine Environment		
IBON	IBON Foundation, Inc.		
IESM	Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology		
IBP	Integrated Bar of the Philippines		
IFFM	International Fact-finding Mission		
ILPS	International League of People’s Struggles		
JAPEX	Japan Petroleum Exploration Co., Ltd.		
JPC	Justice and Peace Center		
KMP	Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas		
LGU	Local Government Unit		
NorAsian	NorAsian Energy Ltd.		

01.

AREA BACKGROUND





SOURCE: *The Philippines of Central Visayas, Philippines: Status and Trends*

Within the Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines (IMPA) Archipelago, the Philippines is the center of global marine biodiversity, while Central Visayas is the epicenter of global marine shorefish diversity with the “richest concentration of marine life on the entire planet” (Carpenter & Springer, 2005).

Central Visayas, tourism hub of the south and one of the top fishing grounds in the country, is situated in the center of the Philippine archipelago. It is bounded on the north by the Visayan Sea, on the south by Bohol Sea and East Sulu Sea, on the west by Tañon Strait and Negros Island and on the east by the Camotes Sea and Leyte Island. It is composed of four island provinces namely Negros Oriental, Bohol, Cebu, and Siquijor. It has a coastline of 2,029 km; 132 municipalities, 109 of which are coastal, and 1,027 coastal barangays and 108 islands (CRMP, 2004).

Central Visayas is a region having 7 distinct fisheries ecosystems: The Visayan Sea, Camotes Sea, Danajon Bank, Bohol Sea, Cebu Strait, East Sulu Sea, and Tañon Strait.

The waters and islands found in Central Visayas constitute an important area economically and politically, aside from being part of the epicenter of global marine biodiversity. It is also of geographic importance in terms of policy development. BFAR and the Fisheries Code of 1998 affirmed this further by saying “The planning process model developed in Region 7 could form as basis for replication

towards developing the national fisheries industry development plan” (Green, et al., 2004).

Recent studies show that the Philippine marine ecosystem is deteriorating and marine resources appear to have been abused to the point of depletion. Despite its 220 million hectares of marine territory, the Philippines is now experiencing a shortfall in marine resources. The volume of coral reefs are declining nationwide, only 4 to 5 percent remain in excellent condition. More than 70 percent of the nation’s mangrove forests have been converted to aquaculture, logged, or reclaimed for other uses. About half of the sea grass beds have either been lost or severely degraded due to land reclamation and pollution. Almost all beaches and foreshore areas are converted into settlements and are under increasing pressures from uncontrolled development, which leads to erosion, sedimentation, and water quality problems. All fisheries are showing decline in total catch despite increasing effort.

For the provinces that composed the region, namely Cebu, Bohol, and Negros Oriental, and Siquijor, fishing is the number two employer next to farming with more than 200,000 directly involved, and a population highly dependent on marine fisheries as source of animal protein. Government data suggests that Central Visayas itself is an important fishing ground supplying marine products all over the Philippines.



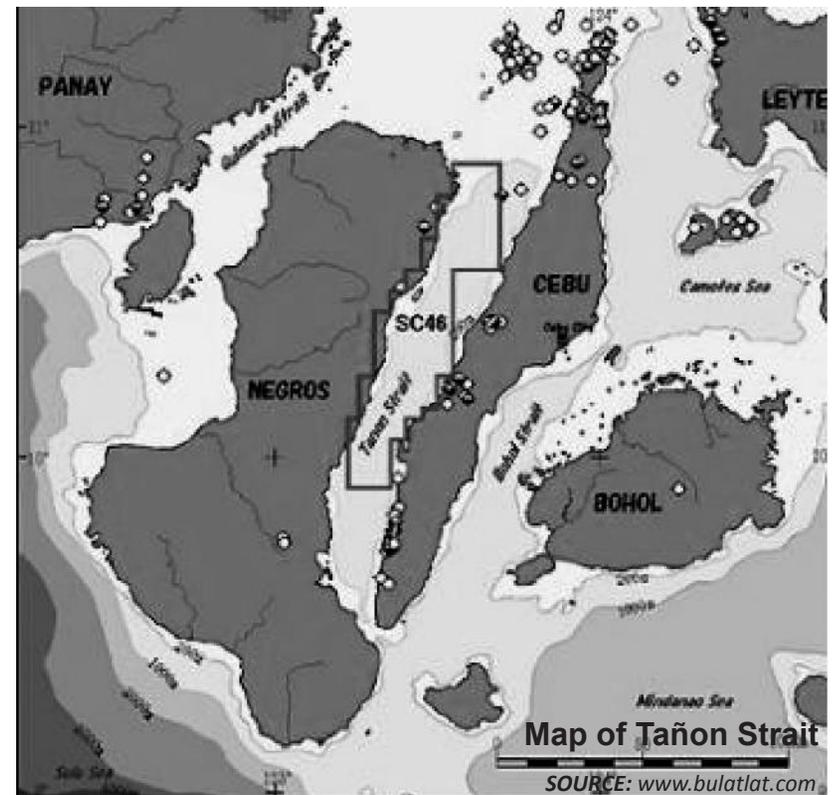
Tañon Strait

Tañon Strait separates Cebu and Negros. In close proximity to it are Western Cebu, Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental. The strait has a total coastline of 452.7 km and a total area of 3,108 square kilometers (km²) and bounded with 36 coastal municipalities and cities of Cebu, Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental.

Patches of mangrove aggregates are found in the southern coast at both sides of Negros Oriental and Cebu. There are 188.3 km² of coral reef within the strait, composed mostly of fringing reef along the Negros and Cebu coastlines.

The Tañon Strait is a distinct habitat of the chambered nautilus (*Nautilus pompilius*, local name *taklong*) and a migration route of Whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*, local name *tuki/butanding*). It is home to certain species of cetaceans, the most interesting of which are the spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*, local name *lumod*) and the dwarf sperm whales (*Kogia simus*, local name *pakatang*). Thus, the strait is one of the priority areas for conservation of cetaceans and reef fishes.

According to Dr. Lemnuel V. Aragonés, Ph.D, associate professor of UP Diliman's IESM and a marine scientist who has been conducting studies in Tañon Strait for the past ten years, "It is a unique and very important part of the marine biodiversity profile of the Philippines, and which is of national, global and ecological importance. This is shown by the very high diversity of cetaceans in this area and its use as their breeding, nursery, feeding and resting grounds." Dr. Aragonés' study revealed that 14 out of 25 species of cetaceans in the Philippines have been sighted in Tañon Strait.



Tañon Strait is also one of the major fishing grounds of Central Visayas and is identified as a major source of squid. Based on the survey of the BFAR and CRMP, there are about 26,850 fishers operating in the area and more than 12,000 motorized and non-motorized boats.

Studies show that fisherfolk plying Tañon Strait have the highest number of active fishing gears such as gillnets (*kurantay*/drift gillnets, *palabay*/bottom gillnets, *patuloy*/surface-set gillnets), and passive gears such as hook-and-lines (*pamasol*) and squid jigs. Beach seining (*sahid/baling*) is also practiced in Tañon Strait, which is tolerated despite being officially illegal.

In recognition of various scientific studies, the administration of then President Fidel V. Ramos responded through Presidential Proclamation 1234 declaring Tañon Strait as a protected seascape.

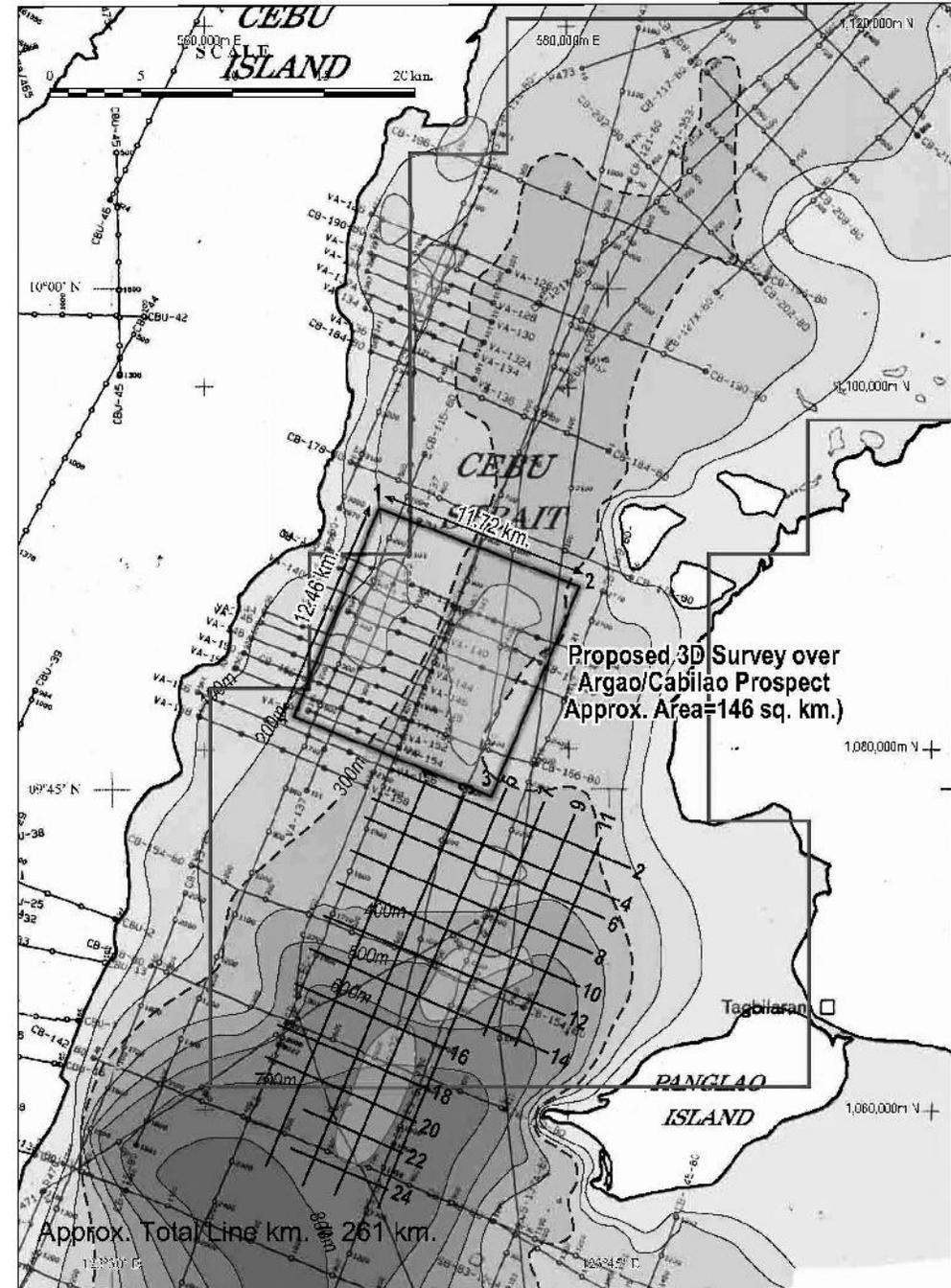
Cebu Strait

Cebu Strait, sometimes called Bohol Strait, is the body of water separating the islands of Bohol and Cebu. It has a coastline length of 342.4 km and a total area of 3,933 km².

Mangroves, interspersed with Nipa palms (*Nypa fruticans*), are found along the rivers leading out from the mainland of Bohol. The strait has over 10.9 km² of mangrove cover dispersed along the coastline and offshore islands. Its coastline is sharply sloping and fringed with coral reefs.

The sea is relatively deep and is famous for the manta ray (*Manta spp*) and the whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) population, which only recently returned in small numbers after many years of hunting.

Near the area of Cebu Strait is the Danajon Double Barrier Reef Bank. It is historically the bank with the most habitat-rich fisheries ecosystem of Central Visayas, having the largest area of both coral reefs and mangrove in the region. It is rich in mangrove habitats and the area is identified as a priority area for the conservation of reef fishes, corals, mangroves and mollusks.



Map of Service Contract 51 in Cebu-Bohol Strait

PROTECT the
Environment
DEFEND JU
People! Mining
DEFEND

02.

CAUSE BACKGROUND

UPHOLD Patrimony,
RESIST Off-Site
Mining!
-FIDEC Inc.-



What is offshore mining?

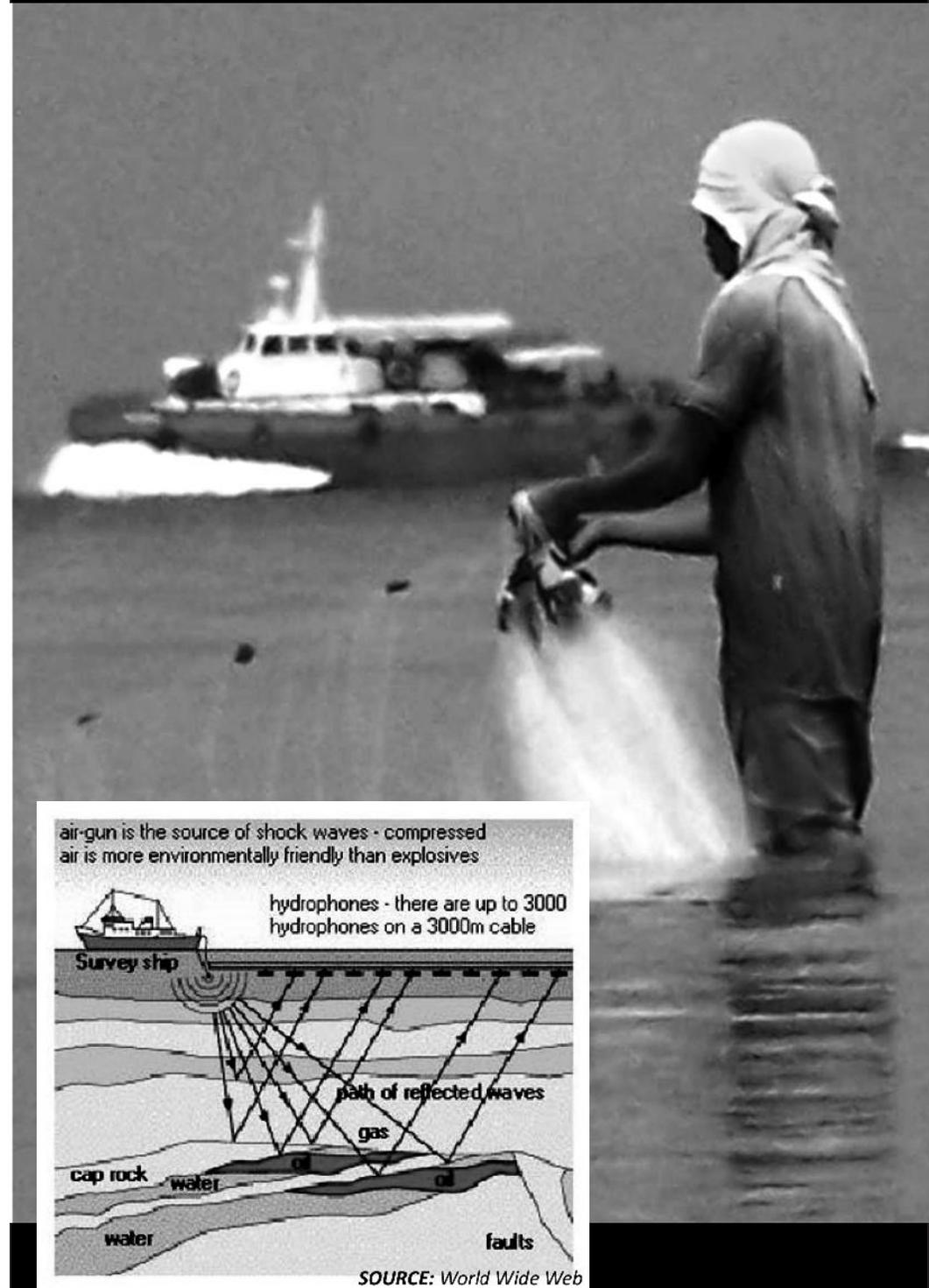
Oil Exploration is the method employed by petroleum geologists to search for hydrocarbons deposited under the earth. The operation has three stages: prospecting and exploration, mine development, and extraction and processing. Before mining can reach commercial operation, prospecting is necessary to determine the potential of a certain site. After a positive identification, an exploration will be deployed to determine the quality and quantity of the reserves and the possibility of developing the entire mining process.

Two Types Of Exploration

Geophysical exploration uses special and scientific gadgets, to zero-in at the exact location and quantity of the deposited mineral. Geophysical considerations such as stone and rock formation, characteristics, and depth is necessary to employ the kind of technology used. Measurement and mineral analysis is based on weight, magnetic property, electric conductivity, and radioactive emission. This method, employed by JAPEX uses a vessel with an airgun and hydrophones connected to a cable dragged by the vessel.

Geochemical exploration, on the other hand, employs analysis on samples such as sediments, vegetation, mud, wells and rivers with metal markings on the area. Samples are tested through reactive chemicals to identify and determine the mineral present.

After the survey, actual drilling will follow.



Convergence of Stakeholders

The intrusion of oil exploration companies in the waters of Central Visayas started immediately when the national government announced that it will undertake initiatives to respond to their so-called national energy independence and needs.

Last May of 2005, the DOE, acting out the program of the Arroyo Administration, contracted JAPEX the task of identifying the volume of oil and natural gas deposit in a previously surveyed protected seascape of Tañon Strait.

On that same year, more than 30 service contracts were awarded by the DOE to various oil and gas exploration companies to identify, mine and develop off-shore oil wells.

A few months after the seismic exploration of JAPEX, fisherfolk organizations under PAMALAKAYA Negros and the newly formed coalition of fisherfolks in the region, the Negros Fisherfolks Forum, sent a communication to its local counterpart in Cebu, PAMANA Sugbo, and consequently FIDEC for a consultation over the project. Together with the national office of PAMALAKAYA, a coordinating body with Cebu as the Secretariat was created and tasked to develop a comprehensive plan regarding the issue including lobbying, protest actions, networking and impact surveys.

On September of 2005, to identify and determine the impacts of the seismic operation, an Environmental Investigative Mission participated by FARDEC, ELAC, PAMANA Sugbo, PAMALAKAYA Negros, KMP, CEC, IBON, and students from CNU among others, was organized. The activity documented cases of fish kills, dramatic reduction of fish catch, human rights violation and destruction of fish aggregating devices.

In 2006, PAMANA Sugbo and the national office of PAMALAKAYA filed a case at the office of the ombudsman against public officials who were behind the presence of JAPEX.

Despite strong and sustained pressure from 2005 until 2007 from communities both domestically and internationally, DOE and JAPEX went on to the next phase of resource extraction, which is the exploratory drilling.

Convergence And The Petition Of The Philippine Association Of Marine Science

Progressive environmental lawyers in Cebu City, upon the request of FIDEC, called for a meeting to discuss possible legal actions. On that historic meeting were: Dr. Vincente Yncino representing the Environment and Health Committee of the CCCI; Atty. Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio, Executive Director of CCEF; UC Banilad College of Law professors Atty. Dante Ramos and Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos; and Atty. Benjamin Cabrido of the USJR College of Law, and convenors of Kalikupan Law Group.

It was during this meeting that Atty. Osorio shared that an anti-oil exploration resolution by the PAMS was passed and circulated in a recent assembly in Iloilo through the effort of the former Secretary of DENR Dr. Angel Alcala and Dr. Lemnuel V. Aragonés.

The petition signed by 170 marine scientists in the Philippines calling for the immediate stopping of the operation emboldened the actions and initiatives of the CCEF, FIDEC, PAMANA Sugbo and the environmental lawyers.

The petition served as an important document that rallied various sectors behind the cause of saving the lives and livelihood of the fisherfolks and the marine mammals thriving in the area.

The petition raised the ante of the campaign, one that is very sectoral from the start, into a higher one that articulated inter-generational security - one that involves not just the fisherfolks and the stakeholders around the seascape but the whole population as well.

It is at this period of the campaign that the fisherfolks no longer felt

1. sign 2. confirm 3. share 4. thank you!

JOIN THE 170 MARINE SCIENTISTS IN THIS PETITION TO STOP THE OIL DRILL!

Target: 10,000
Sponsored by: marine scientists of the philippines
Call to Action

Resolution urging the Department of Energy and all concerned agencies to stop the oil exploration and possible exploitation of the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape (TSPS).

Whereas, Tañon Strait was declared as a Protected Seascape by Presidential Proclamation 1234 by then President Fidel V. Ramos in 1998 in due recognition of the extraordinary abundance and diverse assemblage of cetaceans (dolphins and whales), 11 out of the 25 species found in the Philippines can be sighted in the area, and its known importance as feeding, breeding, and resting grounds for these marine mammals;

Whereas, uniqueness of associated habitats in TSPS, such as coral reefs, mangrove and seagrass communities among others, provide livelihood, support food security; and sustain and safeguard the integrity of the traditional interaction of people and nature, for which protected seascapes have been established;

signature goal: 1,000



754 signatures!

alone. An earlier statement of one of the leading marine mammal expert of the country and the former secretary of the DENR, criticized the DENR for allowing JAPEX to conduct various levels of destructive activities despite having questionable paper, the EIA, and for drilling in a protected seascape.

Snowballing Of Resolutions

The 10 year study of Dr. Aragones on marine mammals in Tañon Strait played an important role in getting together sentiments of various sectors - from the businesses, legislators, lawyers, activists, among others into a motive force against the presence of JAPEX.

Like the other important events that unfolds itself timely in this campaign, Dr. Aragones came to Cebu to speak about his study in less than 24 hours notice. His presentation before the members of CCCI prompted them to send a letter to the Secretary of DOE, Mr. Angelo Reyes, urging his office “to deal with the oil exploration activity in a precautionary manner that will prevent, or at least reduce damage before we reach the stage of irreversible biodiversity loss.”

Knowing that the impacts of the oil exploration has no middle ground, the letter of CCCI is another blow against the project of the DOE.

After the CCCI letter, resolutions coming from the Province of Cebu, the Senate and the Congress came in full force, including one coming from more than 350 organizations around the world under ILPS.

Fisherfolks And Dolphins Went To The Supreme Court

In desperation to pursue the project amidst overwhelming opposition, Secretary Reyes came to Cebu and personally muscled their intention by announcing that the project will proceed on November 2007.

The statement of the Secretary came as a warning. On the same day of the announcement, the fisherfolks vowed to block the project.

On November 15, despite massive protests, the project came to Tañon Strait like a plague. The fisherfolks were barred from going near the oil rig, or else they will be intercepted. The DOE also barred fisherfolks from going out to sea to fish for three long months.

The development prompted the lawyers to hasten the filing of cases against DOE and JAPEX. FIDEC immediately called for an inter-municipality consultation of fisherfolks to identify legal petitioners.

Brilliant lawyers within the group took the scientific data of Dr. Aragones to approach the issue in the most astonishing way. Taking the cue from the landmark case of Oposa vs. Factoran, Atty. Benjamin Cabrido started the idea how the 14 toothed marine mammals in Tañon Strait could serve as the petitioners in a landmark case at the Supreme Court.

He argued that “if more than half of the marine mammals in the country is ‘residing’ at Tañon Strait and for being the same reason why the water was declared protected, then by all means they can petition the court through legal guardians.”

True enough, the dolphins became the petitioners together with their “human” legal guardians Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos and Atty. Rose-Liza Eisma-Osorio, with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the unwilling petitioner.

January, 11 (ORJGINAL)

Official Receipt of the Republic of the Philippines

No 0164272 A

Date 12/20/09

Agency SC Fund Fidu

Payor President Marine Mammals

Nature of Collection	Account Code	Amount
Dep. for Costa		₱ 500.-
Dep. for Sheriff's fee		₱ 200.-
TOTAL		₱ 700.-

Amount in Words Seven hundred and no/100

Cash Check Money Order

Received the amount stated above.

NOTE: Write the number and date of the back of check or money order

ACCOUNTABLE FORM No. 51-W Revised January, 1992 (ORIGINAL)

Official Receipt of the Republic of the Philippines

No 0305341 A

Date 12/20/09

Agency SC Fund Fidu

Payor President Marine Mammals

Nature of Collection	Account Code	Amount
Pocket fee		₱ 2,548.-
Transfer for TRW		₱ 1,000.-
TOTAL		₱ 3,548.-

Amount in Words Three thousand five hundred and no/100

TO ASK SC: STOP OIL HUNT

Mammals join fishers' lawsuit

Dolphins, whales, through 'legal guardians' are petitioners

CAN THEY SUE?

- Mammals, like other animals, have no legal standing, but that is what the lawyers are asking for the Supreme Court to give them legal personality.
- Are the lawyers serious? Or are they just using the mammals to draw public attention?
- Stunt or not, their second petition, filed by fisherfolks with legal personalities, may serve the same purpose: to stop the oil hunt they believe will destroy marine life off

The landmark and novel case at the Supreme Court elicited various reactions from different sectors, but one thing is for sure, it was able to hit the nail on the head, by challenging important legal provisions of the country:

1. Legal Standing of petitioners
2. Constitutionality of the Oil and Gas Exploration
3. Violations to EIA Law

The petition also stretches the coverage of Oposa vs. Factoran while reiterating previously ignored important new legal theories. The Supreme Court petition that shook the country and other legal luminaries from neighboring countries was filed together with the petition of "Natural Persons" or the fisherfolks represented by petitioners coming from Aloguinsan, Pinamungajan and FIDEC.

The DOE, upon hearing of the intention to file the case against them attempted a last minute appeal by requesting for a closed door meeting which the group described as an attempt to bribe the petitioners out of the case.

On December 19, amidst harassments and attempts to derail the Supreme Court petition, Atty. Dante Ramos and Mr. Vince Cinches of FIDEC went to Manila to file the twin case at the Supreme Court, becoming one of the greatest Christmas gifts the fisherfolks ever had in their experience.

After the filing of the case, the IBP Cebu City Chapter and Cebu Province Chapter formed the Environmental Defense Team to serve as a resource in the existing Supreme Court petition.

The Save Tañon Strait Citizens' Movement

The campaign gained more prominence when various sectors became more and more aware of the issue, aside from the fact that they were curious to know the basis why the dolphins went to the Supreme Court.

The academic community in Cebu became more and more active in the issue in particular and environmental conservation in general. Students, young professionals, local government officials, together

with the fisherfolk community requested for a more sustained engagement to identify steps that will shape the involvement of the many youths.

On January of 2008, JPC and Silliman University invited the group to a forum with IBP Dumaguete, and other universities came as participants. In that forum, the participants expressed interest to join in any formation that will help the Supreme Court case and spread awareness.

Negros LGUs along the protected seascape requested the Cebu lawyers and environmental activists and advocates to present the issue in one of the forum they organized with PAMB. They also mentioned that they intended to join the initiatives to save the strait. The UP College of Law in Dilliman, upon hearing about the case, requested the group again to share to them the issue and the initiative.

Going back to Cebu, USC, UC, UP Cebu, USJR, FIDEC, CCEF, PAMANA Sugbo and various students organizations proposed the idea of organizing a 6-module Summer School for the Environment in order to raise awareness among the youth about environmental issues, environmental laws, environmental economics, environmental movements and history, among others.

Months after they started their drilling and a few hours before the launching of STSCM, JAPEX announced that they are pulling out of the protected seascape of Tañon Strait. A few months after their announcement, the Supreme Court consolidated the twin case into one.

The uniqueness of the issue and the formation that responded to it, and of the creative manner that STSCM handled the issue has attracted other communities having various level of environmental problems. Communities from the province of Iloilo, cities of Naga and Toledo, Bohol, municipalities of Borbon, Argao and Sibonga, and various places in Mindanao and Luzon have contacted STSCM and requested for assistance. Even the UNEP requested Atty. Cabrido to present the issue before an international audience in a conference in Bangkok.

STSCM was able to utilize the media effectively and made the issue becoming more and more relevant over a period of time.

In January of 2009, SunStar Cebu recognized STSCM as one of Citizens of the Year of 2008. In the middle of that same year, in an environmental summit organized by the Supreme Court, the Dolphins Case and the Tañon Strait issue became one of the important topic that the Supreme Court referred to.

In a recent communication, according to Atty. Cabrido, the case is about to be decided upon, now that both parties were able to submit their replies completely.

The issue and the campaign which started in 2005 is still gaining grounds, and was able to open various avenues of engaging environmental conservations. The group through FPE's support from the start is very optimistic that the Supreme Court will decide in favor of the petition.





AT RISK. Fishermen in Pinamungajan face the risk of losing their livelihood with the ongoing oil exploration in Tañon Strait.
(SUN.STAR FOTO/AMPER CAMPAÑA)

Whales, dolphins join Arroyo at SC

By PHOEBE JEN INDINO, Correspondent
Believe it or not, President Arroyo is being lumped with animals who are going to court for

By PHOEBE JEN INDINO, Correspondent

Believe it or not, President Arroyo is being lumped with animals who are going to court for a strange legal battle that can happen only in the Philippines.

And the president probably does not even know it, she being merely lumped in the case as an "unwilling petitioner."

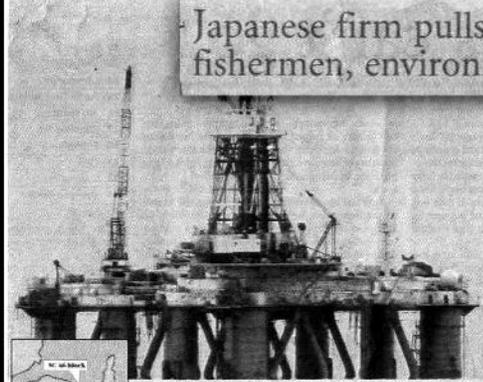
And it is no ordinary court they are going to but the Supreme Court, which is in for an unprecedented surprise when it is expected to be asked today to rule on "lesser life forms" perceived to be under imminent threat by human commercial endeavors. Turn to page 2



President Arroyo takes an early morning stroll... (caption partially obscured)

TANON OIL SEARCH ENDS

Japanese firm pulls out from oil drill project; fishermen, environmentalists hail decision



JAPEX Philippines Ltd. has put up an offshore drilling platform in the waters off Pinamungajan town, western Cebu, as part of its oil exploration along the protected seascape between the islands of Negros and Cebu. (Inset) The exploration later showed that the oil deposit is not of commercial quantity.

L huge deposits of oil and gas, has turned out to be a dry well.

Japex Philippines Ltd. has pulled out from the oil exploration project at the Tañon Strait because of the "lack of commercial oil and gas discovery."

The decision was announced through a press release posted on the website of its Tokyo-based parent company, Japan Petroleum Exploration (Japex) Co. Ltd. dated May 13.

"The Japan Petroleum Exploration Co., Ltd. today announced that its consolidated subsidiary, Japex Philippines Ltd., decided to relinquish SC 46 block, located in Tañon Strait, Philippines at the expiration date of Exploration Period, June 20, 2008, because of the lack of commercial oil and gas discovery as a result of exploration work including drilling of one exploration well," the statement read.

Service Contract (SC) 46 block refers to a 2,580-square-kilometer area of Tañon Strait, a protected seascape between the islands of Cebu and Negros. It is bounded by 36 coastal municipalities and cities in Cebu, Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental.

Japex Philippines Ltd. was established on May 26, 2006, to supervise the oil and gas exploration in Tañon Strait with a paid-in capital of 2.9 billion yen.

According to SC 46, Japex Philippines will lead the oil and gas exploration with 65 percent participating interests, while the Philippine government through X of the Philippines...

03.

OFFSHORE MINING
AND ITS IMPACT





On September 9-11, 2005, an Environmental Investigative Mission (EIM) was conducted along the fishing communities of Toledo City and the municipalities of Pinamungajan and Aloguinsan to determine the extent of effect made by the exploration.

According to the data gathered, three huge foreign-owned sea vessels conducted the survey and that there were no prior consultation to fisherfolk communities and local government units made. According to respondents from fishing communities, notices were given only during the actual exploration where most of them are out fishing. Most of them also mentioned that the presence of the ships made them conclude that there is an exploration. These same data were affirmed when a team composed of 12 members from different people’s organizations - PAMALAKAYA Negros, PAMALAKAYA North Negros District, PAMALAKAYA Vallehermoso, BAYAN, Gabriela, Aglipayan Forum, and Timbang Satellite Environmental Volunteers Organizations of Cadiz City - conducted a separate fact-finding mission (FFM) on 2007.

The same data reported fish catch reduction when FIDEC, PAMANA

Sugbo and STSCM Youth conducted a research in the municipalities of Argao and Sibonga in Southeast Cebu, areas where the Australian offshore mining company, NorAsian, conducted their operation in Cebu-Bohol Strait.

A 10-year research conducted by the leading marine scientist in the Philippines in Tañon Strait, Dr. Lemnuel Aragon, said that the seismic activity of JAPEX last 2005 affected the surface behaviors and relative abundance of cetacean population in the area.

This data coming from Dr. Lemnuel Aragon, was echoed by a leading marine scientist in the country, Dr. Angel Alcala and the Philippine Association of Marine Science.

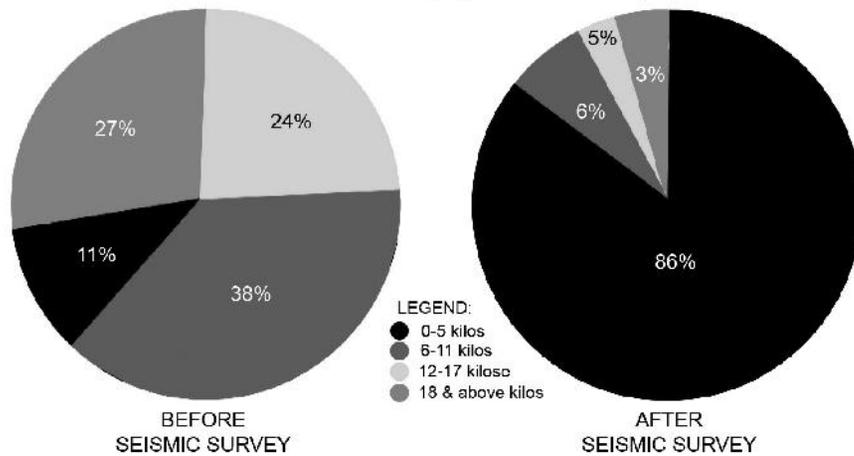
On the other hand, the activity displaced thousands of fisherfolk from their fishing grounds, and affected the supply of fish in the region. According to PAMANA Sugbo and PAMALAKAYA the projected impact of the activity will result to fish crisis that would cut domestic production by an average of 600,000 metric tons of fish and other marine products annually in the next seven to 10 years and will reduce per capita fish consumption of every Filipino by not less than 20 percent.

An international fact-finding mission (IFFM) sponsored by PAN AP and the People’s Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS) last October 2008 also confirmed the findings that the “marine environment and the fisherfolks’ tenure and food security have been destroyed and are continuously being threatened by off-shore oil and gas exploration of foreign companies under service contracts that infringe upon the Philippines’ national patrimony and sovereignty.” The IFFM team was composed of various organizations from Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

TYPE OF FISHING BOAT	MUNICIPALITY/CITY	AVERAGE FISH CATCH (KILO)	
		PRE-EXPLORATION	POST-EXPLORATION
Motorized	Aloguinsan	15-20	5-7
	Pinamungajan	15-20	5-8
	Toledo City	15-20	3-5
Non-motorized	Aloguinsan	4-6	0-2
	Pinamungajan	4-6	0-2
	Toledo City	4-6	0-2

SOURCE: Environmental Investigative Mission 2005

Comparative fish catch of 100 fisherfolks in Argao & Sibonga, Southeast Cebu before and after the seismic survey by NorAsian on September 2008.



SOURCE: Rapid survey results conducted on October 2008 by STSCM Youth

Dislocation Of Livelihood

The EIM and FFM documented fish catch reduction after the seismic survey of R/V Veritas Searcher in May 2005. The average fish catch of fisherfolks drastically reduced by up to 70 percent. According to the EIM in 2005, fish catch of fisherfolks using motorized boats went from 15-20 kilos to 3-5 kilos, while fisherfolks using non-motorized boats went down to 0-2 kilos from 4-6 kilos. In Negros, the FFM in 2007 yielded the same results. Their study sites -- in the coastal communities of Guihulngan City and Vallehermoso in Negros Oriental, and San Carlos City and Calatrava in Negros Occidental -- reported fish catch reduction from 10-15 kilos to 2-3 kilos. This was also the same case with fisherfolks in Argao and Sibonga in Southeast Cebu with NorAsian's seismic survey in Cebu-Bohol Strait last September 2008, where fish catch reported a drop of up to 80 percent. Fish kills were also reported in Aloguinsan, Pinamungajan, Toledo City, Guihulngan and San Carlos City.

Fish aggregating devices or *payaos* were also destroyed by the survey vessel. A *payaos* is a buoy made up of styrofoam materials tethered to the sea floor with concrete blocks and is used to attract pelagic fishes. A total of 136 *payaos* were reported destroyed. Only a few *payaos*

owners were paid Php4,000 or US\$83.33 (US\$1=Php48) through the intercession of the Department of Agriculture while most were not compensated at all.

Fisherfolks were also banned during the four months, from November 2007 to February 2008, when JAPEX undertook its drilling operation. The Japanese company drilled a 3,150-meter deep well just three kilometers off the shore of Pinamungahan. The company deployed its Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit, Hakoryu V, and forbade fisherfolks to enter within a seven-kilometer radius while armed men guarded the perimeter. Thus, fisherfolks and their families were forced to look for alternative sources of income like doing laundry, gathering and selling firewood, and carpentry. Many of their children stopped schooling and got sick since they can no longer afford their education and proper nutrition (Quijano, 2008).

According to different scientific studies, seismic blasting can damage reproductive organs, burst air bladders, and cause physiological stress in marine organisms. It can also cause behavioral modifications and reduce or eliminate available habitat, alter fish distribution by tens of kilometers, and damage planktonic eggs and larvae. Thus, it has been known to drastically reduce fish catch.

Scientific Data Identifying Impacts Of Offshore Mining

Fish catch reduction and fish kills can be attributed to the effects caused by the underwater seismic blasting during the seismic surveys. Several scientific studies have shown that seismic operations can greatly reduce fishcatch around areas where airguns are being fired. Marine mammals have also observed signs of physical stress while seismic surveys are conducted kilometers away (Løkkeborg, 1993). The sound sonic boom from the airgun array can reach up to 255dB, way over the human threshold of 80dB. Other animals' threshold is even lower. According to scientific studies, seismic blasting can cause:

- damage the hearing structures (McCauley et al., 2003)
- body tissues to hemorrhage (Hastings et al., 1996)
- behavioral modifications and reduce or eliminate available habitat (Richardson et al., 1986; Harris et al., 2001; McCauley et al., 2000; McCauley et al., 1998),
- alter fish distribution by tens of kilometers (Slotte et al., 2004;

- Engas et al., 1996),
- damage planktonic eggs and larvae (Dalen & Knutsen, 1987), among others.
- elicit physiological stress and neural-immune responses in Marine organisms (Santulli et al., 1999; Romano et al., 2004)
- reduce catches in commercial fisheries (Løkkeborg & Soldal, 1993); Skalski et al., 1992)

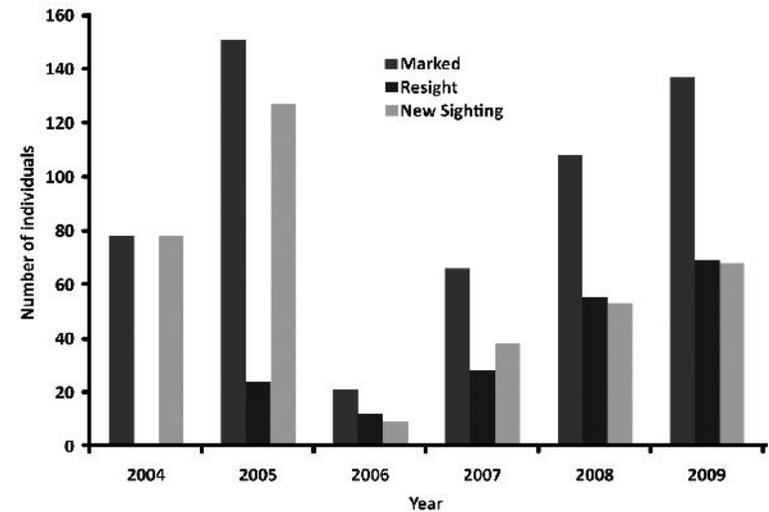
Marine mammals, such as dolphins and whales, rely on sound as their primary sense instead of sight. Unlike humans and other terrestrial animals, they use their sense of hearing to locate food, choose migration routes, and communicate with each other. The powerful noise generated by seismic surveys causes adverse behavioral responses (Pearson et al., 1992; Richardson et al., 1995; Engas et al., 1996) from these animals and affects their population (Aragones et al., unpublished data).

Offshore mining not only displaced fisherfolks and dispersed marine mammals from the area, it also killed communities. Based on various scientific researches and consensus, oil and gas drilling operations generate huge amounts of waste that is discarded into the water. According to the National Academy of Sciences, a single well produces between 1,500 and 2,000 tons of waste material. Debris includes drill cuttings, which is rock ground into pieces by the bit; and drilling mud brought up during the drilling process. This mud contains toxic metals such as lead, cadmium and mercury. Other pollutants, such as benzene, arsenic, zinc and other known carcinogens and radioactive materials are routinely released in “produced water,” which emerges when water is brought up from a well along with the oil or gas.

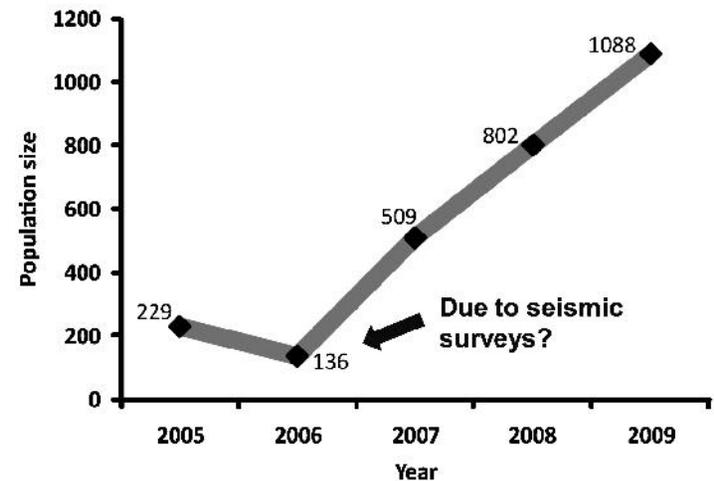
Offshore natural gas drilling causes a significant amount of air pollution. According to the National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration, each offshore oil platform generates approximately 214,000 pounds of air pollutants each year. An average exploration well for oil or natural gas generates some 50 tons of nitrogen oxides, 13 tons of carbon monoxide, 6 tons of sulfur dioxide, and 5 tons of volatile organic hydrocarbons. These pollutants are the precursors to smog, acid rain and contribute to global warming.

Offshore drilling platforms and pipelines spilled 1.8 million gallons of oil in U.S. waters from 1990-1999 in 224 reported accidents – an average of almost 500 gallons a day.

Sightings of spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*)



Population size of spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*)



SOURCE: Aragones et al., unpublished data

Service Contract System: Perks Of Foreign Corporations

The Department of Energy awarded Service Contract No. 46 to JAPEX. Under the Presidential Decree 87 of 1972 or the Service Contract System specified the following benefits:

Obligations of Contractor (Sec. 8)

- Perform exploration works
- Operate the field, if commercial quantity found
- Assume all exploration risks
- Government to reimburse Contractor for all operating expenses
- Service fee: not exceeding 40 percent of the balance of the gross income after deducting the Filipino participation incentive, if any, and all operating expenses

Privileges granted to Contractor (Sec. 12)

- Exemption from laws, regulations and/or ordinances restricting exportation of machinery and equipment which were imported solely for its petroleum operation when no longer needed
- Entry of alien technical and specialized personnel & immediate members of their families
- Exemption from all taxes except income tax
- Exemption from payment of tariff duties and compensating tax
- Exemption upon approval by the Petroleum Board from laws, regulations and/or ordinances restricting the construction, installation, and operation of power plant for the exclusive use of the contractor

Among other important issues against the project, according to legal luminaries service contract system in the Philippines directly violates Art. XII, Sec. 2 of the 1987 Constitution. Under said provision, "(t)he exploration, development, and utilization of natural resources shall be under the full control and supervision of the State. The State may directly undertake such activities, or it may enter into co-production, joint venture, or production-sharing agreements with Filipino citizens, or corporations or associations at least sixty per centum of whose capital is owned by such citizens." On the other hand, respondent JAPEX, by its own admission, is a 100 percent Japanese-owned corporation.

Why Offshore Mining Should Not Be Allowed In The Philippines

Violations of the 1987 Constitution:

- Article II, Section 16
Offshore mining impairs the right to a healthy and balanced ecology since oil drilling pollutes the air, dumps hazardous wastes, carbon emission contributes to climate change/global warming, and destroys the marine ecosystem and the corals, seagrass which are found the in the shallow parts of the municipal waters.
- Article XII, Section 2
"...The State shall protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively to Filipino citizens." This section provides that "The President may enter into agreements with foreign-owned corporations involving either technical or financial assistance for large-scale exploration, development and utilization of minerals, petroleum and other mineral oils according to the general terms and conditions provided by law, based on real contributions to the economic growth and general welfare of the country." Therefore, service contracts are not allowed under the 1987 Constitution. Service contract for offshore mining do not even have an implementing law under the 1987 Constitution. The President, and not the DOE Secretary, signs the document. "...The President shall notify the Congress of any contract into in accordance with the provision, within thirty days from its execution."
- Article XIII, Section 7
The section provides that the "...State shall protect the rights of subsistence fishermen, especially of local communities, to the preferential use of the communal marine and fishing resources, both inland and offshore." This is a social justice provision which the executive department must respect. The Fisheries Code protect these rights by providing that the municipal waters are for the preferential use of the small fishermen. The fisherfolks are displaced and suffer reduced fish catch as a result of oil exploration and drilling. The foregoing provisions are blatantly disregarded by the President and the Department of Energy.

Violations of the Local Government Code (RA 7160):

- Section 16
Environmental protection is a devolved mandate of the Local government units. This section provides that "...local government units shall ensure and enhance the right of the people to a balanced ecology...social justice and preserve the comfort and convenience of their inhabitants."
- Section 27
Oil exploration can not be pushed unless the "prior approval of the *Sanggunian* (local legislative board) is concerned". This refers likewise to the barangays.
- The duty of the municipal government is to "enforce all laws" which include the Fisheries Code which provides, as a matter of policy, that:
 - (a) food security is the overriding consideration in the utilization, management, development, conservation and protection of fishery resources in order to provide the food needs of the population.
 - (b) to protect the rights of fisherfolks, especially of the local communities, with priority to municipal fisherfolks in the preferential use of the municipal waters.

Violations of the Fisheries Code (RA 8550):

- Section 5
"The use and exploitation of the fishery and aquatic resources on the Philippine waters shall be reserved exclusively to Filipinos." Oil exploration and drilling is not allowed in municipal waters.
- Section 12
"All government agencies as well as private corporations, forms and entities who intend to undertake activities or projects which will affect the quality of the environment shall be required to prepare a detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prior to undertaking such development activity. The preparation of the EIS shall form an integral part of the entire planning process pursuant to the provisions of the PD No. 1586 and its implementing rules and regulations." Without an EIS, there can not be an activity contemplated by the DOE such as survey and oil exploration and drilling.

- Section 13
"All Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) shall be submitted to the DENR for review and evaluation. No person, natural or juridical, shall undertake any development project without first securing an Environmental Compliance Certificate from the Secretary of the DENR." Note that the sonar survey was done without an EIS nor an ECC. DOE is already violating the provisions of the Fisheries Code.
- Section 16
The LGUs shall enforce all fishery laws, rules and regulations...

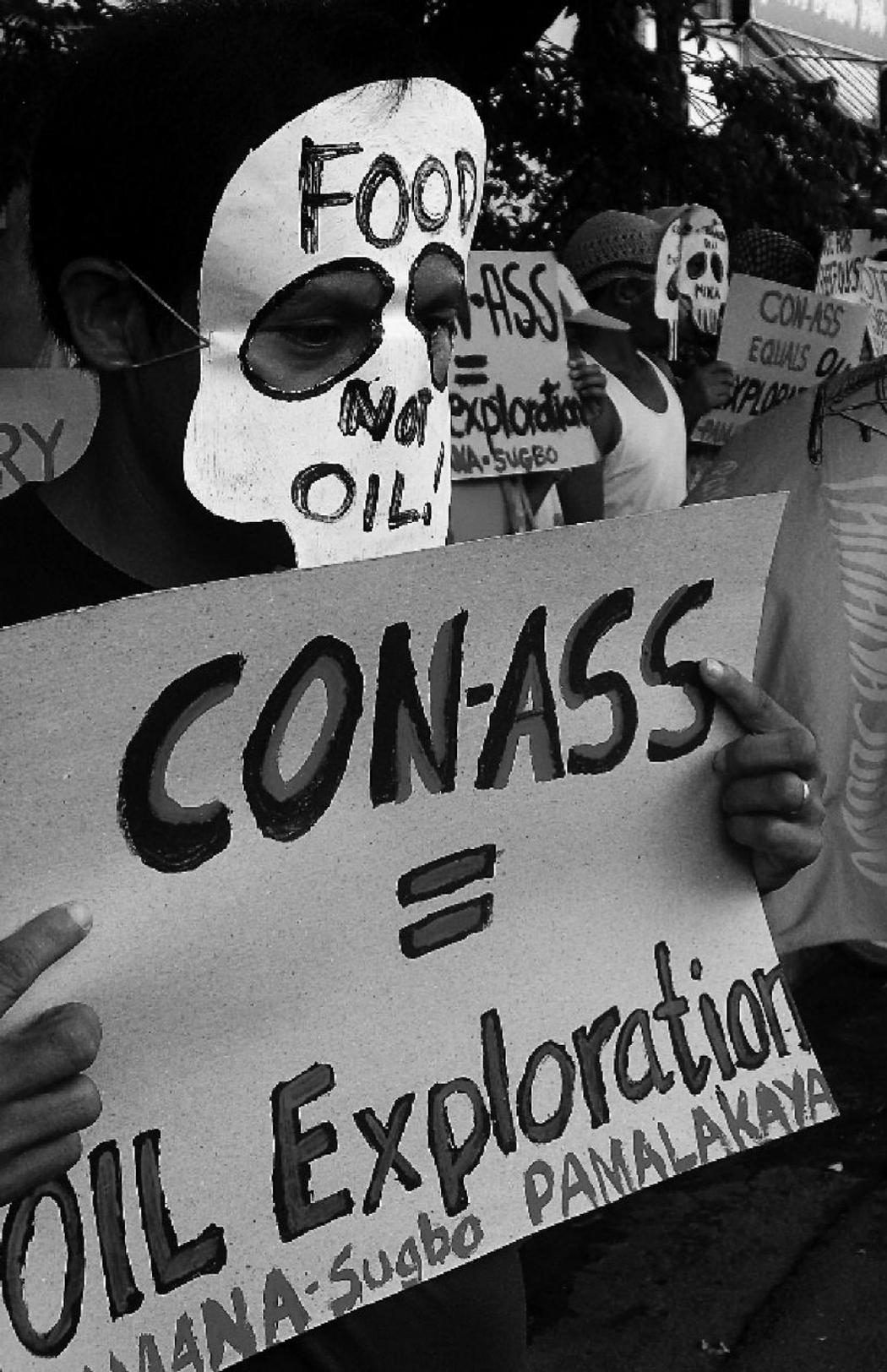
SERVICE CONTRACT PROFIT SHARING	
Gross Proceeds	\$ 100.00
Less: Filipino Participation Incentive Allowance (FPIA) if applicable	7.50*
Recoverable Cost	70.00
	<hr/>
Net Proceeds	22.50
Less: Contractor's Share/Allowances	9.00
	<hr/>
Balance	13.50
Less: Income Tax (Contractor's Share / 65%) c 35%*	4.85
	<hr/>
Government Share	8.65
Less: National Government Share (60%)	5.19
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LGU Share (40%)	3.46
	<hr/> <hr/>
* Percentage of FPIA varies from 1.5% to a maximum	
** Income tax rate for CY 2006 of 7.5%, depending of the participating interest of the Filipino partners	

SOURCE: Balce, G. R. (2007) Powerpoint lecture entitled "Philippine Oil & Gas Exploration in Bohol Strait"



04.

RESPONSE OF FISHERFOLKS



The whisper that caused the avalanche

The Philippines is in possession of some of the world's most abundant seas and is listed as one of the countries considered to be the world's center of marine biodiversity. So why is it that the Filipino fisherfolks who hunt across these seas have to struggle to survive?

A day of a local fisherman is spent hours on end in a rickety boat out in the middle of – oftentimes – shark-infested waters in the heat of a scorching tropic sun. In spite of these everyday sacrifices, however, these fisherfolks return to their homes with minimal fish catch to feed their families and even less to make up for the cost of travel (i.e. fuel, gear and boat maintenance).

Commercial fishing has expended most of the once-available resources, leaving very little for those whose survival depend on the number of fishes they catch in a day. To add further injury to injury, the advent of the JAPEX oil exploration wiped out the little there already was to a zero.

Victor Lapaz, Chairperson of PAMANA Sugbo, recalls the astonishment and fright of these fisherfolks when the seas began to swarm with the bodies of dead fishes, which they refused to bring home for fear of poisoning. Lapaz also recalls how the local government units reacted to the plight of their constituents, offering only minimal help in the form of two sacks of rice to compensate for three months of zero fish catch. Two sacks of rice. For three months. The result of which is certain starvation.

The fisherfolks began to comprehend the unfairness of their situation and moved to try to correct it. However, in their attempts to further plead for their cause – for their livelihood and the lives of their families – they were met with hostile opposition in the form of grim-faced soldiers with guns.

The fisherfolks were silenced. But not for long.

In time, the fisherfolks began to reach out to those they knew would not be apathetic to their situation, people whom they knew would listen to their stifled cries and help them. Foremost of these that the fisherfolks reached out to was FIDEC.

FIDEC, after having assessed the full implications of these unprecedented operations in these supposedly protected seas, tagged certain personalities – non-traditional stakeholders – who would later gather and unite to become the central force in the STSCM. Among these non-traditional stakeholders are the lawyers, scientists and even the media, who in turn reached out to recruit the aid of the students of several of the local universities.

Not too soon, this chain of events rolled into each other to become the avalanche that toppled the tyrant that is offshore mining.

The fisherfolks' active participation in the movement was largely due to the fact that this was their way of life and they had to protect it somehow. This drive for survival allowed the other stakeholders to realize that their ways of living were also in danger. The fisherfolks were the alarm, the wake-up call. Soon, everyone's lives rolled into everyone else's. The danger of one is also the danger of the other; but likewise, the security of one is also the security of the other.



Fisherfolks continuously held protests when dialogues proved to be unfruitful. In the picture above, fisherfolk leaders mailed an envelop containing rotten fish to DOE Region 7 as a sign of continuing hunger and poverty brought about by JAPEX.



Case to halt oil drilling readied

by **Jelene R. Bulambot**
CORRESPONDENT

A group of lawyers and environment advocates will file an injunction case at the Supreme Court within the week to stop the oil drilling in the Tañon Strait.

Vince Cinches, executive director of Fishersfolk Development Center (FIDEC) Cebu, said yesterday the findings of a recent fact-finding mission conducted by at least 12 non-government organizations on eight coastal communities affected by the on-going oil exploration activity showed relevant results which will give weight to the injunction case.

Cebu lawyer Democrito Barceñas said that the injunction case will be filed with the Supreme Court because the damage is of national concern.

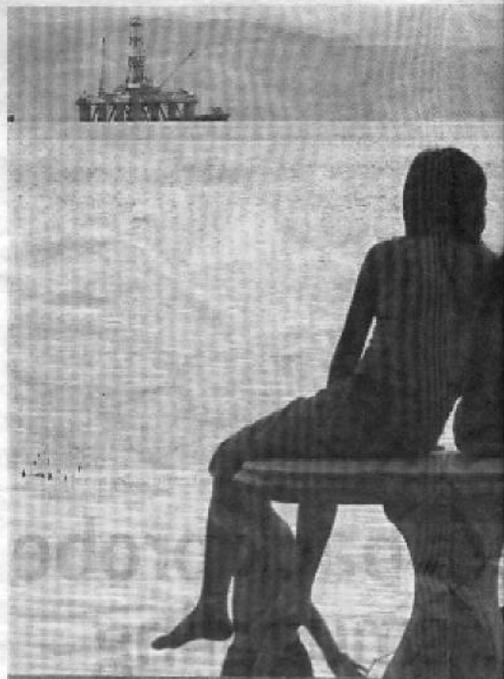
The fact-finding team's report supported the claims of affected fishermen in Pinamungajan and

significantly to the reduction of fish catch in the Visayan seas.

"This will reinforce the affidavits we got from local fishermen in Aloguinsaan and Pinamungajan towns. All these data including those signed by 150 marine scientists will be consolidated and be made part of the injunction case we will be filing," said Cinches, who heads Fidec, an NGO that has been championing the cause of marginalized fishermen in the country.

Cinches said that at least 20 affidavits from fishermen from Pinamungajan and Aloguinsaan towns plus more than 200 signatures from local residents in the towns will form part on the injunction case.

The NGOs which conducted the fact-finding mission included Pamalakaya-Negros, Bayan, Aglipayan Forum and Timbang Satellite Environmental Volunteers Organizations of Cadiz City. Meanwhile, Senate



The fact-finding team's report supported the claims of affected fishermen in Pinamungajan and Aloguinsaan towns in Cebu of reduced fish catch since the oil exploration started two years ago.

...from paying the filing fee. ...at Attorney (Dante) ...did to be able to come up ...the filing fee of P5,000, he ...his friends to help him de ...expenses. With the peti ...red yesterday, it is up to the ...team to assist him in the case. ...need competent lawyers to

300 farmers, fishermen protest

Chris A. Ligan
CORRESPONDENT

Heavy rains did not stop more than 300 farmers, fishermen and their supporters from walking 14 kilometers in protest march from the town of Minglanilla to Cebu City yesterday.

"We march to commemorate the Mendisa Massacre (in 1987) where 13 farmers were killed, as well as protest the government's failure to implement the Genuine Agrarian Reform program," said Nido Abasolo, chairman of the Kilalang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

The group started in Calajagan, Minglanilla, and stopped at the National Highway of Talisay City for breakfast at 7 a.m. They passed by Caribon market then stopped outside the Malabonang of Sugbo for a night.

They ended town Cebu City

town said she wanted to walk, instead of ride the group marshals' jeepney but couldn't with her weak knees.

Neñita Largo, 69, of Aloguinsaan town, told Cebu Daily News she did not feel exhausted during the long march because of the importance of their cause.

"Gusto ko nga makatag-iya sa sa ruta nga among ginitid Aug 73 sa ta bug sa dila apun kay Aloguinsaan nga masina" (I want to own the land we've been tilling for 25 years but until now, it's still unsure whether we can have it), Largo said.

Abasolo urged Cebuano congressmen and church leaders to use their support for the replacement of the Compostela Agrarian Reform Program with Amalgams Act, Crispin (Idra's) House Bill 3059 or the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill.

Victor Lapaz, chairman of



FARMERS, fishermen and their supporters took a nine-kilometer hike from Minglanilla to Cebu City.

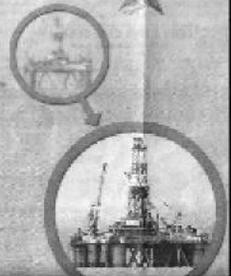
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Aloguinsaan because it is the source of fisher folk

Protests greet start of drilling

By **Wesley A. Durodo**
Staff Writer
and **Chris A. Ligan**
Correspondent

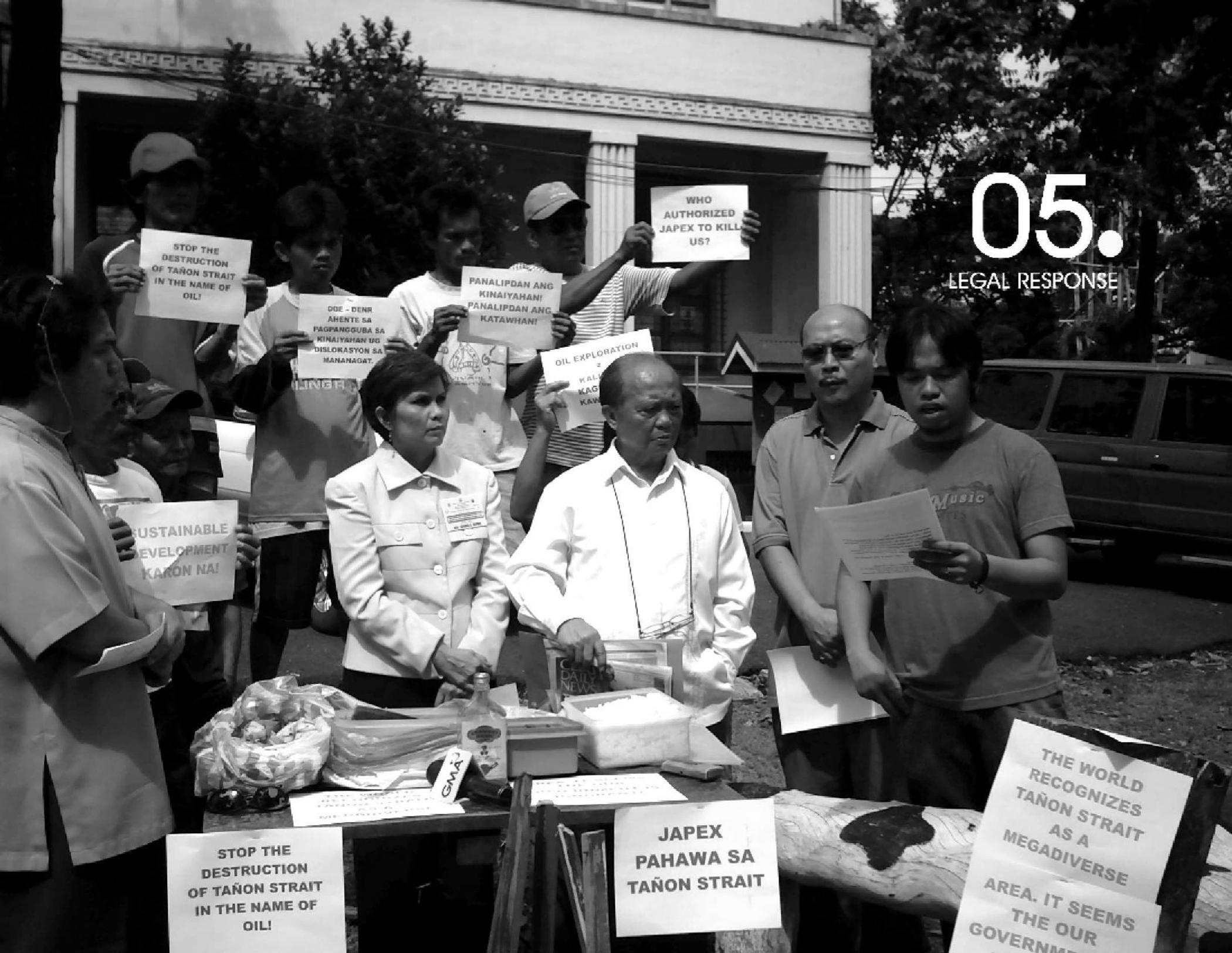
The emergence of a farmers and fishermen opposition to the Tañon Strait, the body of water that separates the islands of Cebu and Negros yesterday.



With over a billion barrels of oil expected to be drawn from Tañon Strait, the fisherfolk from the western towns of Cebu are worried that they would lose their source of livelihood. Turn to page 2

05.

LEGAL RESPONSE



STOP THE
DESTRUCTION
OF TAÑON STRAIT
IN THE NAME OF
OIL!

DDE - DENR
AHENTE SA
PAGPANGGUBA SA
KINAIYAHAN UG
DISLOKASYON SA
MANANAGAT.

PANALIPDAN ANG
KINAIYAHAN!
PANALIPDAN ANG
KATAWHAN!

WHO
AUTHORIZED
JAPEX TO KILL
US?

OIL EXPLORATION
KALAKANG
KAGAWAN

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
KARON NA!

STOP THE
DESTRUCTION
OF TAÑON STRAIT
IN THE NAME OF
OIL!

JAPEX
PAHAWA SA
TAÑON STRAIT

THE WORLD
RECOGNIZES
TAÑON STRAIT
AS A
MEGADIVERSE
AREA. IT SEEMS
THE OUR
GOVERNMENT

Setting standards for environmental justice

According to STSCM convener, Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, one can be certain that whenever there are international conventions the Philippines would be among the first countries to jump at the opportunity to commit to the agreements established by those conventions.

“The officials,” stated Atty. Estenzo-Ramos, “would go to the extent of crafting laws just to show to the international communities that [the Philippines] is doing its share. The problem, however, lies in the implementation – or the lack thereof. It’s like there [is] no law,” she declares, “...and as bad as it is that [these officials] do not implement the law, they violate it.”

Now, when it comes down to the violation of laws regarding graft and corruption, the ordinary Filipino citizen will respond to it – hands down and no questions asked. These same citizens, however, are less sensitive to the violations of environmental laws or the significance thereof, and therefore take them for granted. How much more the marginalized fisherfolks and the resident dolphins and whales (who know nothing about human laws), but who stand to lose the most in the advent of offshore mining?

This is where lawyers like Atty. Benjamin Cabrido, Atty. Dante Ramos, Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos and Atty. Rose Liza Eisma-Osorio, come in as the guardians of these two citizen groups, who are in desperate need of competent and knowledgeable representatives to face their adversaries and oppressors -- JAPEX, the local government units and even the Governor of Cebu, Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia herself, in her total disregard and non-enforcement of the environmental laws -- on equal ground.

Environment defense team formed

by Nilda L. Gallo
REPORTER

Two lawyers organizations yesterday created a joint legal team to help defend environmental issues in general, and the Tañon Strait in particular. The Joint Environmental Defense Team, formed by members of the Cebu City and Cebu Province chapters of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), set as its mission to “promote the rule of law, good environmental governance and for all stakeholders – government business and civil society – to follow the path to sustainable development.”

It is incumbent upon us to promote the defense of the environment in the light recent development that would negatively affect the environment,” said Briccio Joseph Boholst, president of IBP-Cebu City, during the signing of an MOA yesterday between the two IBP chapters.

Boholst an president of IBP yesterday sig



MEMBERS of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines' Cebu City and Cebu Province chapters lock arms with environmentalists after signing an agreement forming a joint team that would investigate environmental matters. (LARA POSTER/DAVID S. MENDOZA)

dum of agreement (MOA) creating the Joint Environmental Defense Team at the IBP offices in the Capitol compound.

Adlawan said that the creation of the team showed the IBP's commitment to protect the environment, not only for the Tañon Strait where ex-

On climate change, part of the MOA reads: “The problem is global but the action is local. The people, especially the members of the Bar, have to do their share now in stemming the tide of ecological devastation.”

The memorandum said members of the Bar, as stewards of the

The Cebu City and Cebu Province chapters of the IBP each appointed three representatives to the Joint Environmental Defense Team.

Environment lawyer Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, who heads IBP's National Environmental Action Team for Central Visayas (Nest-

investigate the allegedly improper dumping of waste materials from the Hakuryu V drilling platform.

Estenzo-Ramos said the joint team would coordinate with Nest-7 in conducting its investigation.

The drilling platform, owned by the Japanese Petroleum Exploration Corp. (Japex), has taken position in the Tañon Strait in the waters off Panamungajan town on Cebu's west coast to drill into the seabed and test the viability of oil deposits underneath the strait.

Waste material from the drilling process is transported from the platform to a private lot in barangay Poblacion, Aloguinsan town just south of Panamungajan.

While the dumping of waste material has been issued an Environmental Compliance Certificate by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, allegations have been raised that the sediment contains materials that do not comply with the ECC.

ral lawyers investigate

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not able to... because the... with sever... ents such... gate as pa... decided to g... and paid th... the dolphin... to ask a ce... om the De... are and De... nd were ex... e filing fee... y (Dante... to come u... P5,000, h... help him de... th the pet... is up to th... solidate th...

by... After the... marine... Tañon... n of the hu... ngajan and... the Supren... going oil dr... Vince Cinch... if the Cent... velopment... separate p... n was filed... iculture Se... vironment S... Energy Sec... l officials c... an Petrol... mpany Ltd... fishermen C... n Yanong... l the 45-page complaint on be... cases,” said Cabrido.



Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “The good lawyer is not the man who has an eye to every side and angle of contingency, and qualifies all his qualifications, but who throws himself on your part so heartily, that he can get you out of a scrape” – which is exactly what these environmentalist lawyers did when they represented the vulnerable sectors of the hazards of the oil exploration in their stand against the negligent lawmakers.

“Environment,” declares Atty. Estenzo-Ramos, “is all about fighting for a better quality of life – not just for this generation, but for future generations.”

Furthermore, lawyers, according to Atty. Ramos, have a significant role to play in citizen movements not only because they are citizens themselves but also because they have “better knowledge of the law and how the law can be implemented”. A large effort has been contributed through Information and Education Campaigns (IEC) in order to make other lawyers understand and see the crucial function that environmental laws play in the society.

As practitioners of law they use the law as a tool for changing the behaviors, especially in the part of public officials, and legal action to compel them to implement the law and to remind them that they are not above it and that they are accountable for their violations as well as their negligence. Atty. Estenzo-Ramos also mentions the Philippines Constitution’s Article XI which contains the law regarding the accountability and the high degree of standard required for public officials and the Republic Act 9485 also known as the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 which serves as the code of ethical conduct for public officials. “These are laws that every citizen should know.”

One aspect of a successful program is the participatory form of governance. “You can never go wrong,” she declares, “if you invite all stakeholders in the decision-making process, which is a right under the Constitution.”

“As a lawyer,” states Atty. Ramos, “our role was to prepare the petition, come up with arguments and participate in the education campaign that we conducted to make the people aware of the negative effects of the oil exploration. There are no credits being claimed,” he adds. “If there’s any credit, it would be credited to the vigilance of the people in asserting their rights.”

Dolphins In The Supreme Court

An encounter with dolphins is not something that anyone can take lightly. “Dolphins move with a soft, gentler grace... even when leaping from the water, they emerge delicately and enchanting,” describes Venus Beta-chi A. Badilla, a law student of the University of Cebu, in her article regarding her first-hand experience with the dolphins in the seas of Alegria, part of the protected seascape of Tañon Strait.

Dolphins are certainly among the awe-inspiring wonders of nature. Not only, however, for the fact that they are indispensable assets to a country’s eco-tourism, but also because they are - among all the other creatures in the world - the one species that is most similar to humans in terms of intellectual capacity. As a matter of fact, some - dolphin enthusiasts and scientists alike - believe that dolphins are potentially more intelligent than humans.

Regrettably, these amazing creatures are also among the topmost endangered species in the world, oftentimes the casualties of the irresponsible use and abuse of aquatic resources. This was perhaps among the reasons that the Tañon Strait, which is home to 15 out of the 28 known species of cetaceans, was declared a protected area in the first place.

When the JAPEX oil exploration breached these protected seas, many of these creatures died, needlessly, in a place where they should have been free and secure from any unnecessary danger. Their homes were invaded, ransacked and destroyed, their families murdered and their food supply eradicated.

Any normal citizen would not hesitate to take this as an offense and demand compensation for the accumulated losses. The dolphins and whales of Tañon Strait, being injured residents of a protected territory, with the help of Atty. Benjamin A. Cabrido, Jr., Professor of Environmental Law in the University of San Jose Recoletos and dolphin representative, filed a lawsuit against the offending parties and took it to the Supreme Court.

Atty. Cabrido identified three major issues that led him to push the lawsuit. The first issue is the *locus standi* of the dolphins, their right to appearance in a court of justice as the real party in interest (who stands to be benefited or injured by the judgment in the suit) in the name of which every action must be prosecuted or defended.

The second is that according to the Stipulation *pour autrui* (conferring a clear and deliberate right or benefit to a third 'party' in a contract), several international conventions (including the United Nations Charter for Nature and the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity), as well as the Philippine Constitution itself - according to these laws - mineral exploration in Tañon Strait is illegal.

The third issue is in regards to the non-conformance of the 'Hard Look' Doctrine, under which all agencies must "to the fullest extent possible" provide a detailed environmental impact statement (EIS).

Dolphins, being free spirits as they are, oblivious to the inadvertent complications of any human system, were utterly unaware of such laws and concepts that advocate their right to live. The responsibility thus falls upon the shoulders of those whose ways of life and studies

revolve around the understanding of such laws - lawyers such as Atty. Cabrido and the dolphins' legal guardians, Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos and Atty. Rose-Liza Esma-Osorio.

The suit called "Dolphins v. Secretary Reyes, et al, SC-G.R. No. 180771" is doubtlessly quite a novelty. Whoever heard of dolphins filing a suit? In fact, some may have thought that it would be so easily dismissed as many suits are in this part of the world. Fortunately for the petitioners, both dolphins and environmental advocates, the suit was in fact not dismissed and is, even now, under the Supreme Court's heavy scrutiny.

The offending parties were suspended, and the dolphins - as of the moment - have their home back.

When such laws and such humans converge with the singular purpose of upholding the rights of innocents (human or non-human), striving tirelessly in their attempt at environmental preservation, there is perhaps hope yet for future generations for *Homo sapiens* and cetaceans alike.



06

THE YOUTH





GREEN VOTE

Young members troop to the Commission on Elections to register and soon vote for environmentally-aware government officials.

These youths were very enthusiastic in calling on the public to choose leaders who are consistent in protecting the environment and reject those who support offshore mining and other environmentally destructive projects.

A driving force in environmental advocacy

The word “youth” is defined as “the condition of being young”, or “a time of life between childhood and maturity”. It is, however, also considered synonymous with the word “immaturity”. True enough, their journey to self-actualization, most – if not all – become well-acquainted with the world of rebellion, with the adverse horrors of mediocrity, and with the pleasures of unchecked “freedom”. When George Bernard Shaw said that “youth is wasted on the young”, he was not too far off the mark.

Although this may be the case for most, Helen Keller also once said that “it is not possible for civilization to flow backwards while there is youth in the world. Youth may be headstrong, but it will advance its allotted length.” Youth is the stage of great potential, which can also be characterized by idealism and critical thinking. Idealism on one hand creates in the youth the vision – a metaphorical mould – of a brilliant future; critical thinking, on the other hand, allows them to see that this particular future is in grave and nigh-irreversible danger.

When that danger came in the form of the JAPEX oil exploration that was conducted in the supposedly-protected area of Tañon Strait, those of the youth who saw the danger took no time to contemplate their priorities and jumped at the first occasion to stand for environmental integrity.

“It takes an open mind and a feeling heart to notice the needs of others and it takes courage to step up,” says Maria Thesa Lusica, a student of

St. Theresa’s College in Cebu and a youth convenor of STSCM and a

This sector of the STSCM came to be during the summer of 2008 when the core members of the organization gathered together and decided to involve students from the different universities in Cebu, Philippines. The involvement of these universities provided the students an avenue to ask questions and gain insights to know more about the campaigns, and organization. The members of the core group conducted numerous advocacy sessions wherein the youth of these were informed regarding the effects of the JAPEX oil exploration on the defenceless marine life forms and equally defenceless coastal communities whose life and livelihood depended almost entirely on these life forms.

The drastic impact that the JAPEX oil exploration had on the local fisherfolks was made known to them – how these fisher folks continued to struggle against both the poverty and hunger that was largely due to the declining fish catch brought about by the commercial and illegal fishing in the area, which was now heightened to radical degrees by the oil exploration. They were made aware of the government’s continued



negligence and total disregard for the welfare of these communities as well as the government's unrestrained support for the unjust oil explorations that have destroyed many lives – both human and non-human – in the name of “development”.

“Genuine development,” according to Armarie A. Borden, student council member of St. Theresa's College, “doesn't only imply industrial upgrade and economic growth, it requires having a sustainable development for everybody wherein there is justice and equity; wherein no one is being deprived and oppressed; and most of all, every family and every citizen, is satisfied and is living in a comfortable and adequate lifestyle.”

In response to the damage that has been caused by the preliminaries of the offshore mining, the youth sector of STSCM provided school tours and advocacy booths in a number of universities and colleges in Cebu. These advocacy campaigns featured STSCM speakers from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), the people's organization Central Visayas- Fisheries Development Centre (FIDEC), student representatives, and teachers. This program gave STSCM an additional thrust to further take its awareness campaigns to a higher level.

“Many may say that what we do,” says James Earl Kho, a student of the University of San Carlos and a youth convenor of STSCM, “might impede development and further sufficiency for the energy that we need on a daily basis. I would like to respond by saying that development can be realized when we begin to respect the environment, its providence, [and] people.”

Atty. Gloria Estenzo-Ramos, one of the core members of the STSCM, has also stated that the youth group served as the forefront force in this entirely voluntary citizens' movement against the abusive governance of the ruling system. The youth, who have been associated with “immaturity” – for the sake of their futures and for the sake of the world – have crossed that threshold and have become a driving force in the fight for environmental advocacy.





Teachers and facilitators deliver input to students from the University of San Carlos, University of Cebu, University of the Philippines - Cebu, and University of San Jose - Recoletos.

The Summer School for the Environment is an interactive mobile school that held classes in mountain reserves, beach resorts and coastal communities found in several municipalities in the province.



SUMMER SCHOOL

The Summer School was primarily designed for the youth interested in advancing their knowledge and skills in promoting and protecting the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape. At the end of each course, the participants came up with proposed actions that mitigate or prevent negative impacts of development interventions and other human activities to the environment.



The communities became the classroom for the youth, and the fisherfolk their teachers in one of the modules of the Summer School. The modules are people-centred and participatory in approach in both the design and implementation.



NO ENTRY
NOR ASIAN
-PAMANA-SUGBO-

NOR ASIAN
Get out of
our SEA
-PAMANA-SUGBO-

PROTECT the SEA
FISHES and
FISHERFOLKS
-PAMANA-SUGBO-

STOP OFF-SHORE
MINING
-PAMANA-SUGBO-

DO NOT
REPEAT THE
TRAGEDY OF
JAPEX!

DIRECTLY AFFECTED

The fisherfolk communities register their protest against the evils of offshore mining. Children, who can't be left behind at home, pin their parents in holding up placards. They may not fully understand the cause but their stomachs already know the hunger brought about by offshore mining.





A JOURNALIST'S ACCOUNT

Exploring Tañon

Published in The Freeman

June 28, 2008

Coming from my hometown of Valencia, I left unforgivingly early (the sun was not yet up!) to make sure that I would be able to meet the group (the Save Tañon Strait Citizens' Movement and the Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation) that was going to take us dolphin watching off the coast of Bais in Oriental Negros. I arrived in Negros Island the night before as Mike Ocampo of Hari ng Negros asked me to secure the "mystical swords of Mt. Kanlaon" which he will be using for a photo shoot in the hot springs of Pulangbato in my hometown.

When I arrived at the private wharf where the group coming from Cebu disembarked, I realized that I was pretty early. Nonetheless the group was also way ahead of schedule with the van they hired turning an otherwise four-hour trip into a daring two-hour experience.

On reaching Bais City, we were greeted by Dr. Lemuel Aragones of the University of the Philippines' Institute of Environment Science and Meteorology who gave us a briefing on what to expect of the trip and a brief lecture on the different cetaceans (dolphins, whales and porpoises) and the wildlife that populate the waters.

Dolphins can be spotted along the strait throughout the year but they can best be seen during a clear day when the waves would not mask the dorsal fins of these creatures. They playfully chased the boat that we were riding, or were we the one who chased them? They were jumping out of the water every now and then until they dived



into the deep waters where they just disappeared. An urge for me to jump into the water was defused by a warning from Dr. Aragonés who said that swimming with dolphins in the wild is pretty dangerous especially along the strait which is considerably deep.

Most of the dolphins that we saw were spinner dolphins and being nocturnal, they usually sleep at 10:00 in the morning. An interesting information that Dr. Aragonés shared with the group is that this time of year is the breeding season for these dolphins, the reason why they may act in an unusual manner. He advised the group to remain quiet so as not to disturb the dolphin's ritual.

The spinners are the ones which are most abundant in the region but despite the plentitude that we saw, Dr. Aragonés said that these were nothing compared to the time before JAPEX started their oil exploration in May 2005. The JAPEX group already left the strait, unfortunately so did most of the dolphins.



We had lunch at the pristine Manjuyod white sand bar, a seven-kilometer island of white sand that only surfaces during low tide. There are several cottages in stilts equipped with solar panels giving transients the convenience of electricity in the middle of the ocean. During high tide, these cottages appear to be floating in the middle of the deep Tañon strait.

Before heading back home, we dropped by the 400-hectare mangrove forest and bird sanctuary – apparently a tourist magnet, as well. A series of walkway was constructed by the locals to ensure better access to the middle of the forest where most of the birds are. We were told that some of the visitors not only go to the mangrove forest to appreciate the birds in their natural habitat but also to spend a reclusive picnic along the strips of white sand in the middle of the forest.

The whole trip was indeed full of blessings and inspiration and my only regret is that we were not able to bring picking rods and garbage bags which could have been useful as there were plenty of trash floating in an otherwise untainted Tañon strait.

For only P2,500.00 for a 15-seater boat and P3,500.00 for a 20-seater boat, you can already enjoy the blessings of Tañon Strait. A P100.00 per head meal can also be arranged aboard the boat with a personal cook who happens to make the best grilled fares this side of the island. For more information on the Tañon Strait tour, you may contact the Bais City tourism office at 035-402-6629 or the Manjuyod Tourism office at 035-4041136. Make sure to pick up the trash you might see floating.

Should you wish help save this fragile Tañon Strait seascape, you may visit www.savetanon.multiply.com.



08.

LESSONS FROM THE CAMPAIGN

Green on the outside, Red on the inside: Ecology and nationalism

*“Diviner than the Dolphin is nothing yet created, for indeed they were
aforetime men and lived in cities along with mortals, but...they exchanged
the land for the sea, and put on the form of fishes; but even now, the righteous
spirit of men in them preserves human thoughts and human deeds.”*

-- Oppian of Ancient Greece in his poem *Halieutica*

On December 20, 2007, the Supreme Court issued an official receipt detailing a docket fee of 2,548.00 pesos and a prayer for temporary restraining order (TRO) fee of 1,000.00 pesos. The total amount was 3,548 pesos; the receipt number was 0305341, and the payor – resident marine mammals.

Interestingly, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was implicated as *unwilling co-petitioner* in the TRO prayed for by the mammals. The writ of preliminary injunction or temporary restraining order, to cease and desist from further oil exploration, drilling and blasting operations at and underneath the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape, was to be issued by the Supreme Court against the public respondent Department of Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes and private respondent Japan Petroleum Exploration Company Limited (JAPEX).

The case above exemplifies the ambivalence in Philippine environmental policy-making whilst a sundry of local as well as international environmental legislations abound. Very recently, the 14th Philippine Congress and President Arroyo signed into law Republic Act No. 9512, *An Act Promoting Environmental Awareness through Environmental Education and for Other Purposes*, precisely to popularize environmental laws. The new law contains provisions on the scope of environmental education covering both theoretical and practicum modules, incorporation in the national service

training program (NSTP), declaration of environmental awareness month, and capacity-building program for educators. Indeed, the role of education is not only to foster patriotism and nationalism, but also to impress the importance of environmental conservation and ecological balance towards sustainable development.

The Values of Nationalism for Ecology

The positive value of nationalism is that members of the community are expected to have an ‘active interest in the preservation and well-being of their community.’ Here, nationalism has potential to work for the protection of the environment since the well-being of the community heavily depends on the ecosystem that sustains nations.

The Save Tañon Strait Citizen’s Movement

The Save Tañon Strait Citizens’ Movement (STSCM) is a citizens’ movement in Cebu promoting sustainable lifestyle for all. It was founded in 2007 by environmental lawyers and social scientists in Cebu with expert help from a renowned marine biologist. STSCM has the following objectives: (1) to learn about the natural and legal environments in Cebu; (2) to generate lessons on how humans manage the environment; (3) to help people live sustainably; (4) to strengthen the core values of respect, responsibility and compassion, and (5) to nurture future environmental leaders.

STSCM aggressively fulfilled all these objectives through university tours, community immersions, summer environmental schools, and multi-media campaigns where the environmental justice framework is presented together with informative issues about the protection of the Tañon Strait. The 2008 summer school for the environment was distinctive in nurturing environment leaders. The movement was so successful that they were able to organize the *Green Vote campaign* targeting the new electors for the 2010 elections. Today, members take due notice of environment-friendly presidential, congressional, and local candidates for office. The objectives of the STSCM must have been met and their impact widely felt because in January 2009, this very young organization was awarded by Sun.Star Cebu Daily as *2008 Citizen of the Year*.

The STSCM is so named because at the time of its birth, members gave priority to exposing and opposing the violations committed by JAPEX and the Philippine government towards the life of both the resident marine mammals and humans as well as the livelihood of the latter. The movement consistently invokes the proclamation of former President Fidel Ramos of the Tañon Strait as protected seascape. The Tañon Strait is a narrow passage of water bounded by the islands of Cebu in the east and Negros in the West. Offshore oil exploration by the Department of Energy and JAPEX threatens the rich biodiversity of marine life in the area and goes against the provision in the law that activities in the Strait shall not threaten marine life, in particular the endangered dolphins and whales. The proclamation was followed through by an executive order of President Joseph Estrada creating the Tañon Strait Commission supposedly promoting optimum and sustained use of resources to accelerate socio-economic development in the countryside especially in coastal communities, which remain to be economically depressed.

The biggest threat to the Tañon Strait according to the STSCM is the offshore drilling by JAPEX and the Department of Energy, and of course, with the sanction of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. The Tañon Strait Commission became the instrument to justify such activities in the area. Some of its relevant functions are to:

- 1) Negotiate and enter into management and/or consulting contracts in pursuit of the development of the Basin;
- 2) Negotiate with local and foreign financing institutions, subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of Finance and the Secretary of Budget and Management, funding, technical and other forms of assistance for government projects in the Basin;
- 3) Extend the necessary planning, management and technical assistance to existing and prospective investors, and;
- 4) Exercise such other powers as may be assigned by the President.

STSCM has a formidable foe in the government of the Republic of the Philippines represented by the President herself, the DOE, and the biggest government ally – the foreign investor in the legal personality of JAPEX. The STSCM argues against a development discourse bent on increasing power

and oil supply for the entire archipelago although it is clear that extracted products and by-products will have to undergo processing outside the country and come back as expensive imported commodities. More so, the exploration and drilling activities is now the subject of two important cases filed before the highest court.

Breaking The Watermelon

The Save the Tañon Strait Citizens' Movement is a creation of Philippine nationals who take the positive values of nationalism such as *solidarity*, *heritage*, and *transcendental obligation* to the future in the arena of environmental struggle. Nationalism which is mostly understood by Filipinos as 'love for country' is performed by the members in negotiating in the halls of justice, academe, and coastal communities the uniqueness, symbolic value, and utility of the Tañon Strait.

STSCM creates a 'nation' where it does not exist. The Tañon Strait becomes a politicized community or a zone of conflict where local government officials either support the movement or JAPEX. STSCM therefore stands in alliance or in conflict with a multiplicity of actors – State and non-State actors, foreign and domestic. The persistent campaigns and dialogues that STSCM organized in the municipalities of Cebu and Negros speak of how nationals from different local government units 'imagine' themselves as one, in solidarity, for a desirable future. They may never know or hear of others in this community but they are aware that the Tañon Strait connects them to each other as humans and to other non-human beings such as the resident marine mammals, as well as secure their immortality as diligent stewards of the basin to benefit the future generation.

STSCM considered the Tañon Strait, the space and place in their nationalism, as instrumental. However, this works well with enlightened anthropocentrism since, right now, the best way to fight for the preservation of the strait is to highlight its potential harm to the livelihood of the dependent coastal communities.

Indeed, nationalism and ecology can go together. However, the kind of partnership or fit depends on how well nationals have imagined themselves as one nation or community. If in the case of the STSCM, the imagination is

complete in sharing one common resource for livelihood than the dolphin 'talk', surely the fit results into enlightened anthropocentrism. In order for other imaginings to occur, environmental education must come in and prioritize issues and concerns as well as the motivations and ethics involved. To this day, it is perhaps conceptually and theoretically difficult for STSCM nationals to position themselves together with proponents of pragmatism, stewardship, land ethics, animal rights, and others. What is certain is that they have taken practical positions, strong convictions, towards the plight of the dolphins, fisherfolks, and the preservation of marine biodiversity in the Tañon Strait. The watermelon is green on the outside; what's on the inside, is a surprise!

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PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF MARINE SCIENTISTS' CALL TO ACTION

CALL TO ACTION

RESOLUTION URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ALL CONCERNED AGENCIES TO STOP THE OIL EXPLORATION AND POSSIBLE EXPLOITATION OF THE TAÑON STRAIT PROTECTED SEASCAPE (TSPS).

WHEREAS, Tañon Strait was declared as a Protected Seascape by Presidential Proclamation 1234 by then President Fidel V. Ramos in 1998 in due recognition of the extraordinary abundance and diverse assemblage of cetaceans (dolphins and whales), 11 out of the 25 species found in the Philippines can be sighted in the area, and its known importance as feeding, breeding, and resting grounds for these marine mammals;

WHEREAS, uniqueness of associated habitats in TSPS, such as coral reefs, mangrove and seagrass communities among others, provide livelihood, support food security; and sustain and safeguard the integrity of the traditional interaction of people and nature, for which protected seascapes have been established;

WHEREAS, the impacts of activities such as seismic surveys, exploratory drilling, and actual oil mining operation would negatively impact the marine ecosystem and organisms dependent on it; sound is very important to whales and dolphins as they use it for hunting, navigation and communication, and in general, these animals maybe sensitive to certain sound levels; coincidentally, a study being conducted by Aragones et al. in the area showed immediate negative effects on the surface behaviors and delayed (1 year after) negative response on the relative abundance of spinner dolphins implicating short and intermediate term changes on these animals possibly brought about by the seismic surveys (using gun arrays) conducted in the summer of 2005;

WHEREAS, the process used to evaluate the potential impact of seismic surveys and exploratory oil drilling had procedural lapses, lacked transparency and appropriate consultation with stakeholders, and failed to seriously and adequately consider substantial scientific evidence on the potential detrimental impacts of such activities to marine animals like mammals and fish.

NOW THEREFORE be it:

RESOLVED, that further seismic surveys and exploratory drilling be immediately stopped in due recognition of the protected status of Tañon Strait and its national, global and ecological importance;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the impacts of such activities be recognized for the threats they pose to marine animals like whales, dolphins and fish, people's livelihood, and potentially irreplaceable and invaluable natural heritage;

RESOLVED FURTHERMORE, that an appropriate body undertake the investigations and review with adequate inputs from the scientific community and affected stakeholders;

RESOLVED FURTHERMORL, that the current system of obtaining Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) in ecologically critical areas (ECA) should be evaluated in the light of the serious threats posed to important habitats like the Tañon Strait Protected Seascape for assessing future oil explorations and similar undertakings;

RESOLVED FURTHERMORE, that copy of this resolution is circulated to the following:

- Office of the Environmental Ombudsman of the Philippines
- Office of the Senate, Committee on Environment (Senator Pia Cayetano)
- Office of the Senate, Committee on Economics (Senator Loren Legarda)

Office of the House of Representatives, Committee on Environment
Office of the House of Representatives, Committee on Economics
Office of the House of Representatives, Committee on Energy
Integrated Bar of the Philippines, Cebu and Negros Oriental Provincial Chapters
Office of the Senate Committee on Women and Children's Affairs (Senator Jamby Madrigal)
Senator Miguel Zubiri
All concerned local, provincial and regional government units
Office of the Team Leader of the Visayan Sea Squadron (Atty Antonio Oposa)
All media outfits

AND IT IS FINALLY RESOLVED, to conduct simultaneous and intensive investigations on the above matter from all concerned agencies.

WE, members of the Philippine Association of Marine Science (PAMS) and fellow marine scientists and practitioners, whose signatures appear below, strongly support this resolution.

Signed this 26th day of October 2007 at Punta Villa Resort, Iloilo City.

LETTER OF CEBU CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO THE DOE SECRETARY



November 28, 2007

HON. ANGELO REYES
Secretary
Department of Energy
Metro Manila

Dear Secretary Reyes,

Greetings from the Cebu Business Community.

We are writing this letter of concern on the impact of the oil exploration on the biodiversity of Tañon Strait.

It is scientifically proven that the Strait is one of the country's biodiversity hotspots in terms of cetacean density and diversity, as well as coral reefs. The area is also a distinct habitat of the Chambered Nautilus, and a migration route of Whale Sharks, hence the proclamation of the area as a protected seascape under Proclamation 1234 signed by then President Fidel Ramos on May 1998.

While we at the Chamber believe that economics and biodiversity resource systems can be integrated in a comprehensive and sustainable manner, we feel that all stakeholders in this exploratory activity should address the need to balance the utilization driven policy involving modification of biodiversity for human needs, with the conservation driven policy for maintaining natural biodiversity.

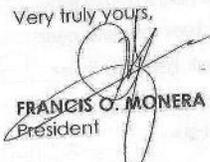
Biodiversity is important on global, ecological, and human scales. Biological processes regulate global climate and cycling of essential elements and substances and as a result perpetuate a global system favorable to the support of life. Greater species diversity contributes stability to ecosystems, and conversely, a healthy functioning ecosystem

supports greater diversity of life. From the human perspective, our societies need living resources, and greater biodiversity offers better variety of foods, building materials, and medicines amongst others.

Our country is one of the contracting parties in the Convention on Biological Diversity in Rio de Janeiro signed on June 1992, objectives of which include the country's responsibility to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity. Further, the Philippines is a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 1992. The IUCN, a union of sovereign states, government agencies, and NGOs, initiates and promotes scientifically based actions that will ensure perpetuation of the natural environment.

Given these international commitments, we would like to call on your good office to deal with the oil exploration activity in a precautionary manner that will prevent, or at least reduce damage before we reach the stage of irreversible biodiversity loss.

Very truly yours,


FRANCIS O. MONERA
President



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DR. ANGEL ALCALA ON OFFSHORE MINING IN TAÑON STRAIT

The Tañon Strait Oil and Gas Project

Dr. Angel C. Alcala

Sometime ago this year, an assistant secretary of the Department of Energy and a Japanese official of the Japan Petroleum Exploration co., Ltd. (JAPEX) came to see me in my office at the SU Angelo King Center for Research & Environmental Management to explain this project.

From that meeting, I gathered that this gas exploration project is planned to be carried out in the Tañon Strait off Aloguinsan and Pinamungajan, Cebu.

The direct impact area has a radius of 1.5 kms and the secondary impact area has a radius of five kms. The project will use a floater rig.

The project plans to drill this year a well 3,000 meters below the sea surface. Drill cuttings will not be discharged to the immediate area but will be collected and dumped into the sea elsewhere, I was told.

Because the project is exploratory, the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) is not necessary according to the DENR, and only an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) is needed. A copy of this IEE was given to me for our review.

In this IEE, a list of five groups of data is presented in a table. Another table listed eight names that composed the EIA Study Team, some of them I know personally. It is assumed that the report of this team is the basis for the environmental and resource information discussed in the IEE. This information was reviewed by our team of marine biologists at SUAKCREM, which is the subject of today's column.

Our review concluded that the environmental and resource survey was *extremely rapid*, lacking in critical data essential for valid and meaningful comparisons in order to determine the impacts of the exploratory drilling. The following discussion gives the details:

1. The baseline data (DENR 7 PCRA) are too old and not suitable for the project. PCRA data are meant for use by stakeholder communities, and not suitable for the project, and a more detailed technical methodology was not presented. This is needed for an environmentally sensitive project such as this one. A more detailed technical assessment of marine habitats is required. The methodology has to be properly documented (examples, how many transects were surveyed by what procedures, density of fishes and other marine organisms per unit area, total number of target species, of indicator species, etc.)

Fish densities presented were too low – 2,000 fish individuals per square kilometer; we have found 2,000 individuals per 500 square meters around Cebu and Negros; something wrong here!

To put it bluntly, the methodology employed, and consequently, the data gathered, do not meet acceptable standards, cannot be used as baselines for future monitoring of drilling effects, and therefore, not acceptable.

2. Of prime importance is the construction of a fisheries profile. For this, the IEE document should be clear on how the data are gathered so they can be verified for credibility in any future inquiry.
3. On fish data composition (p.39, Chap. 5), technical data and graphs with units need to be presented so they can be compared to other existing data within the whole country.
4. On catch composition per gear type, the data presented are old (2001). If the catch was this bad back in 2001, it is expected to be worse now. A proper catch per unit effort spans at least one year, and not done instantly. A detailed methodology was not presented in the study.
5. Substrate types were not determined, and major coral growth forms were not reported including those most vulnerable to pollution such as sedimentation. Susceptibility of vulnerability indices of sites was not assessed.
6. The disposal of drill cuttings presents a problem. One area identified is the Sulu Sea. But the Sulu Sea is a prime fishing area and has high biodiversity! Dumping cuttings into this sea unnecessarily creates additional problems.

In brief, we found the IEE document wanting in the critical survey data and information needed for determining the environmental and socio-economic impacts of the proposed drilling operation of JAPEX.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 212

"ATTACHMENT C"

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 212

INTRODUCED by Representatives TEODORO A. CASIÑO, EDUARDO R. GULLAS, BENHUR L. SALIMBANGON, ANTONIO V. CUENCO, JOCELYN SY-LIMKAICHONG, GEORGE P. ARNAIZ, HENRY A. TEVES, SATUR C. OCAMPO, CRISPIN B. BELTRAN, LIZA L. MAZA, and LUZVIMINDA C. ILAGAN

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPACT OF OFFSHORE MINING IN THE VISAYAN SEA

WHEREAS, in keeping with the Philippine government's plan to make the country an energy independent country set forth in the 2004-2010 Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, the government has been awarding service contracts to various foreign oil and gas exploration companies since the Malampaya oil and gas project in 2001;

WHEREAS, the targets of oil and gas exploration operations are protected seascapes rich in marine biodiversities, as well as other fishing grounds declared as environmentally fragile;

WHEREAS, there are 34 service contracts for offshore mining in such critical waters as the Visayan Sea to include the Tañon Strait, a body of water separating the island provinces of Cebu and Negros, and Cebu-Bohol Strait, separating the provinces of Cebu and Bohol, as well as the waters of Antique, Leyte, Palawan, Mindoro Occidental, Albay and Camarines Sur;

WHEREAS, in the Tañon Strait, two oil and gas exploration companies- the Forum Exploration Inc. of Canada, and Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. Ltd. (Japex) entered a 7-year contract with the Philippine government to explore and undertake oil and gas exploration, and another 25-year contract for the extraction and controlling process;

WHEREAS, in the Cebu-Bohol Strait, the oil and gas exploration activity in 444,000 hectares of marine waters will be undertaken by Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development, Alcom Gold Resources Corporation, Petro Energy Corporation and farmed-in by the Australian-owned AustralAsian Energy Ltd. and Ottoman Energy Ltd;

WHEREAS, showing just how important the Visayan Sea is, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Cebu Province approved on July 30, 2007 Resolution No. 2524 Exhorting the Congress of the Philippines to Proclaim the Visayan Sea as Marine Reservation and Heritage Site, Being Host to the World's Richest Marine Biodiversity Area;

WHEREAS, ongoing oil and gas exploration activities in the Cebu-Bohol Strait have met strong opposition from small fisherfolk, local government officials, beach owners and environmental groups who fear long-term, adverse effects on areas covered by all the Congressional Districts of Cebu Province, Cebu City, Negros Oriental, Bohol, the Lone Congressional District of Bacolod City and First and Second Districts of Negros Occidental;

WHEREAS, national fisherfolk group Pamalakaya and its local chapter in Cebu, Pamana-Sugbo, and other NGOs namely the Cebu Relief and Rehabilitation Center, Rural Concern's Network, Cebu Alliance for Renewable Energy and the Central Visayas Fisherfolk Development Center (FIDEC) conducted an Enviromental Investigative Mission (EIM) on September 9-11, 2005 in the fishing barangays of Toledo City, Pinamungajan and Aloguinsan to find out the effect of seismic tests and other oil exploration exploration activities of Forum and Japex;

WHEREAS, the investigative mission undertaken yielded the following results: 1). Average fish catch (in areas where seismic tests were conducted) were drastically reduced by 67 to 75 percent or from pre-oil gas exploration of 15 to 20 kilos average catch per day to 3-5 kilos of fish per day. 2). A total of 120 "gangos or payaos", local name for artificial coral reef and indigenous fishing methods were destroyed in Toledo City and municipalities of Pinamungajan and Aloguinsan. Only 33 payao owners were paid by Forum and Japex, during the early phase of oil and gas exploration.

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WHEREAS, Pamalakaya and FIDEC assert that oil and gas drilling operations produce huge amount of water waste ranging from 1,500 to 2,000 metric tons of highly toxic water waste materials per drilling;

WHEREAS, oil and gas exploration activities could lead to massive production of other toxic waste materials such as cadmium which causes lung cancer, lead which causes gastrointestinal diseases, blood and kidney disorders, mental retardation and effects on the nervous system, chromium which causes lung and liver cancers, kidney and other respiratory illnesses and arsenic which causes lung, liver and skin cancers;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government through the Department of Energy are pushing these projects despite the problems posed by offshore mining activities to the livelihood of small fishermen and marine environment and these undertakings' implications to the country's natural resources, national patrimony and sovereign rights of the people;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the House Committee on Natural Resources conduct a full-blown inquiry on the impacts of offshore mining in the Visayan Sea, Central Philippines, in the name of public interest, environmental protection, social justice and the national welfare.

Adopted,

Teodoro A. Casiño, PL - BAYAN MUNA
Eduardo R. Gullas, Cebu 1st District, KAMPI
Benhur L. Salimbangon, Cebu 4th District, KAMPI
Antonio V. Cuenco, Cebu City 2nd District, PROMDI-BOPK-LAKAS
Jocelyn Sy-Limkaichong, Negros Oriental 1st District, LAKAS-CMD
George P. Arnaiz, Negros Oriental 2nd District, NPC
Henry A. Teves, Negros Oriental, 3rd District, LAKAS
Luzviminda C. Ilagan, PL - GABRIELA
Liza L. Maza, PL - GABRIELA
Crispin B. Beltran, PL - ANAKPAWIS
Satur C. Ocampo, PL - BAYAN MUNA

Henry A. Teves, Negros Oriental, 3rd District, LAKAS
Luzviminda C. Ilagan, PL - GABRIELA
Liza L. Maza, PL - GABRIELA
Crispin B. Beltran, PL - ANAKPAWIS

PHILIPPINE SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 278

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
First Regular Session

SENATE
PSR No. 278

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

A RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE ALLEGED ADVERSE EFFECTS OF THE OIL EXPLORATION AND DRILLING IN THE TANON STRAIT THAT MAY RESULT IN THE LOSSES OF SOURCES OF LIVELIHOOD OF FISHERFOLKS AS WELL AS THE IMMINENT COLLAPSE OF ECO-TOURISM IN THE SAID AREA WITH THE END IN VIEW OF DEVISING MEASURES TO COUNTER THE SAID LOSSES

Whereas, Section 16, Article II of the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines declares that the State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature;

Whereas, Section 7, Article XIII states that the State shall protect the rights of subsistence fishermen, especially of local communities, to the preferential use of the communal marine and fishing resources, both inland and offshore. It shall provide support to such fishermen through appropriate technology and research, adequate financial, production, and marketing assistance, and other services. The State shall also protect, develop, and conserve such resources;

Whereas, Section 16 from the same Article bestows the right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making shall not be abridged. The State shall, by law, facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms;

Whereas, the Philippines was a signing party in the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, thereby compelling the country to promote the protection of ecosystems, natural habitats and the maintenance of viable populations of species in natural surroundings;

Whereas, the same treaty recognized that it is vital to anticipate, prevent and attack the causes of significant reduction or loss of biological diversity at source;

Whereas, the same treaty also noted that where there is a threat of significant reduction or loss of biological diversity, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to avoid or minimize such a threat;

Whereas, the same treaty bestows the signing party the task to promote, on the basis of reciprocity, notification, exchange of information and consultation on activities

under their jurisdiction or control which are likely to significantly affect adversely the biological diversity of other States or areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, by encouraging the conclusion of bilateral, regional or multilateral arrangements, as appropriate;

Whereas, Tanon Strait straddles the islands of Negros and Cebu and is a distinct habitat of the chambered nautilus (local name, *tahlong*), a migration route of Whale Sharks, and home to at least nine species of cetaceans;

Whereas, the Strait houses a relatively high marine biodiversity with the northern portion known for its cetacean populations, thus whale and dolphin-watching (eco-tourism) is also a major industry besides fishing that earns at least two million pesos a year, as identified by a study;

Whereas, Presidential Proclamation 1234 declaring the Strait as a protected seascape was signed by then President Fidel V. Ramos in 1998 due to the aforementioned characteristics;

Whereas, it was reported that on 21 December 2004, the Department of Energy (DOE) signed a contract with Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. (JAPEX) for oil exploration and drilling in a 2,850 kilometer area offshore of Tanon Strait;

Whereas, fact-finding studies undertaken by concerned people's organizations claimed that there were adverse effects such as environmental destruction and fish catch reduction after the first exploration activity through seismic surveys launched in the year 2006;

Whereas, the same group alleged that the first exploration activity was not preceded by an environmental impact assessment and that there were no consultations involving the fishing communities amid the dangers that the seismic surveys poised to the environment;

Whereas, the second oil exploration activity commenced on mid-November of 2007 along with a fishing ban of two months reportedly imposed by JAPEX; during this period, the said firm shall be conducting exploration activities covering seven square kilometers of Tanon Strait;

Whereas, a study pointed out that the economic losses of the 1,500 fishermen that may be brought about by the two-month ban will amount to an average of P16 million;

Whereas, experts in marine sciences asserted that the oil exploration activities might drive away marine organisms and species of dolphins, as well as affect the sexual behavior of the latter, thus greatly affect the eco-tourism and fishing that make up most of the livelihood of the communities within the area;

Whereas, numerous groups through their resolutions and positions coured through media and other national agencies have called for investigations and review by appropriate government institutions, taking into account the inputs of the scientific community;

Whereas, there is a need to look into the alleged harmful effects in the environment brought by the activities in the course of finding out commercially viable quantities of oil and gas reserves in the Tanon Strait;

Whereas, the alleged threats to the livelihood of the communities necessitate an investigation with the end in view of formulating remedial measures to mitigate the adverse consequences of the said activities;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the appropriate Senate Committees to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the alleged adverse effects of the oil exploration and drilling in the Tanon Strait that may result in the losses of sources of livelihood of fisherfolks as well as the imminent collapse of eco-tourism in the said area with the end in view of devising measures to counter the said losses.

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator

PHILIPPINE SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 141

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }
First Regular Session }

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

7 SEP 20 1976

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

SENATE
P. Senate Resolution No. 141

Introduced by Senator M. A. Madrigal

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHY AND THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE HEALTH OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE AREAS ALONG OR WITHIN THE VISAYAS SEA, CENTRAL PHILIPPINES, BICOL AND SOUTHERN TAGALOG REGIONS OF THE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATIONS BY FOREIGN CORPORATIONS WITH THE END VIEW OF ENACTING REMEDIAL LEGISLATION

WHEREAS the 2004-2010 Medium Term Philippine Development Plan envisions an energy-independent Philippines;

WHEREAS pursuant thereto, the Philippine government has been awarding service contracts to various foreign companies for oil and gas explorations around the country;

WHEREAS most if not all of these oil and gas explorations are being undertaken in the protected seascapes of the country that are rich in marine resources and biodiversity;

WHEREAS these areas are already in need of urgent rehabilitation and stricter protection due to unabated exploitation and abuse and other forms of environmental destruction;

WHEREAS the Philippine government has reportedly entered into a seven-year contract to undertake oil and gas explorations in the country with Forum Exploration Inc. of Canada and Japan Petroleum Exploration Co., Ltd;

WHEREAS the Philippine government has also allegedly entered into contract services with other foreign oil and gas companies such as the Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development, Alcorn Gold Resources Corporation, Petro Energy Corporation, Austral Asian Energy Ltd. and Ottoman Energy Ltd.;

WHEREAS two of these service contracts are located in the Cebu-Bohol Strait and the Tañon Strait between Cebu and Negros islands, that are both among the top ten major fishing grounds in the country;

WHEREAS these foreign oil and gas companies are also eyeing the waters off the coasts of Palawan, Antique, Ragay Gulf in Bicol and Mindoro Occidental in Southern Tagalog area;

WHEREAS residents in Cebu and Negros claim that Forum Exploration Inc. and Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. Ltd. have already conducted seismic testing in their areas to determine the extent of oil and natural gas deposits, using high-voltage air guns and huge boats with long cables and pipes as well other equipment to dig the seabeds and appraise the geophysical surface;

WHEREAS investigation conducted by the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA) and the Visayas Fisherfolk Development Corporation in relation to these oil exploration projects resulted in the following findings: 1) the drastic decrease of fish catch in the areas where seismic testing were conducted; 2) the destruction of 120 "gangos" or "payaos" or coral reefs in Toledo City where one of these seismic surveys took place; 3) reports of fish kills in barangays Talavera, Luray II, Calong Calong, Ibo and Bato in Toledo City; Tajao, Pandacan, Tutay and Cabiongan in Pinamungajan; Cantabogon, Boho, Poblacion and Bonbon in Alguinsan; and 4) rising cases of skin rashes and other types of skin diseases among residents, especially children, in affected areas;

WHEREAS there is a need to review these oil and gas exploration contracts and study the effects of the implementation of these to the environment as well as the health and livelihood of residents in the affected areas in order to safeguard the right of the people to health, a balanced and healthful ecology and the national patrimony;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, the Committee on Health and Demography and the Committee on Energy to investigate, in aid of legislation, the negative effects to the environment and the health of residents of the areas along or within the Visayas Sea, Central Philippines, Bicol and Southern Tagalog Regions of the oil and gas explorations by foreign corporations with the end view of enacting remedial legislation.

Adopted,

M. A. Madrigal
M. A. MADRIGAL

List of organizations involved

- Aglipayan Forum
Alliance of Toledanons Against Coal Ash
Alyansa sa mga Mananagat Batok sa Hulga sa NorAsian (AMBAHAN)
Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN)
Bol-anong Kahugpong sa mga Kabus nga Nanagat (BOKKANA)
CebuBohol Relief and Rehabilitation Center, Inc. (CRRC)
Center for Environmental Concerns, Inc. (CEC)
Central Visayas Farmers' Development Center, Inc. (FARDEC)
Central Visayas Fisherfolk Development Center, Inc. (FIDEC)
Central Visayas People's Network for Life and Environment, Inc. (KINABUHI)
Coastal Conservation and Education Foundation, Inc. (CCEF)
Community Empowerment Resource Network, Inc. (CERNET)
Escalante Fisherfolk Organization
Federation of Southern Fisherfolk in Thailand
FoE Japan
Foundation for Philippine Environment (FPE)
Gabriela
Ibon Foundation, Inc.
Indonesian Mining Advocacy Network - JATAM
Integrated Bar of the Philippines Cebu (IBP Cebu)
Integrated Bar of the Philippines Cebu City (IBP Cebu City)
International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS)
Justice and Peace Center of Silliman University
Kapunungan Alang sa Kauswagan sa Kasadpan - Sugbo, Inc.(KAKASAKA)
Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment (Kalikasan PNE)
- Kapunongan sa mga Gagmayng Mangingisda sa Bais (KASAMABA)
Municipality of Bais City, Negros Oriental
Municipality of Vallehermoso, Negros Oriental
Nagkahiusang Kusog sa Estudyante in UP Cebu (NKE)
Nagkahiusang Mananagat sa Tajao (NAHIGMATA)
Negros Occidental Fisherfolk Forum
Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA)
Panaghugpong sa mga Gagmayng Mananagat sa Sugbo (PAMANA Sugbo)
Panglao Fisherfolk Organization
People's Coalition for Food Sovereignty, Malaysia (PCFS)
Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PAN AP)
Philippine Misereor Partnership - Central Visayas Cluster
Save Tañon Strait Citizens' Movement (STSCM)
Simala Bantay Dagat Association (SIMBADA)
Southeast Asia Oil Watch Network
Southern Philippines Action Network (SPAN)
Timbang Satellite Environmental Volunteers Organization of Cadiz City
Tubigon Fisherfolk Organization
University of Cebu College of Law
University of San Carlos Department of Economics
University of San Carlos Department of Political Science
University of San Jose-Recoletos College of Law
University of the Philippines in the Visayas Cebu College
UP Diliman - Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology

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save tañon strait

CITIZENS' MOVEMENT

This book chronicles the story of how Cebuano environmentalists united to protect the Tanon Strait seascape from destructive oil exploration activities. Using scientific data and interviews with the stakeholders, it proves that protection of the environment is not just an issue for the directly-affected but is an issue for all of us. Read how a group of fisherfolk, NGO workers, lawyers, students, professionals, and scientists came together to conduct one of the most successful environment protection campaigns in Central Visayas and in the Philippines.