

Mr Michael Lyndon Garcia (Philippines)
2005 United Nations – The Nippon Foundation of Japan Fellow



Bio-sketch

Mr. Garcia holds a Bachelor of Arts Major in Economics and Management from the University of the Philippines Visayas. After graduation, he joined the Division of Social Sciences (1997) as a lecturer in Economics where he rose to the position of Assistant Professor. He subsequently obtained a Master in Marine Management (MMM) from Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada. He then began working with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) of the Philippines as Senior Economic Development Specialist. His work with NEDA includes the provision of technical assistance to agencies and coordination of sectoral plan implementation in the livestock, coastal and marine resources management sub sectors; monitoring and evaluation of development policies, programs, and projects in the natural resources management sub-sector and formulation of appropriate recommendations.

Fellowship Host Institutions and Supervisors

1. Centre for Marine Policy, University of Wollongong (Dr. Marin Tsamenyi)
2. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations

Research Abstract

Progress in the Implementation of the Philippine National Marine Policy: Issues and Options

The Philippine Cabinet Committee on Maritime and Ocean Affairs (CABCOM-MOA), an inter-ministerial body, was tasked with the coordination and implementation of the National Marine Policy (NMP) until it was abolished in 2001. The dismantling of the CABCOM-MOA can be viewed as a policy reversal as it contradicts previous government initiatives toward integrated ocean management. The experiences gained from the CABCOM-MOA, however, provide important insights in redesigning an institutional framework for coastal and marine governance in the Philippines.

This study evaluates the extent to which the objectives of the NMP were achieved and discusses policy and institutional problems related to the NMP and CABCOM-MOA. It also assesses institutional structure options that will enhance coordination and integration of ocean policy.

The slow progress in the implementation of the ocean-related programs, pursuant to the objectives of the NMP, is attributed to the lack of integration of the national ocean planning process with the overall national development planning. Ocean policies and programs often have concomitant public investment requirements, which if not included in the national planning and programming priorities would likely fail due to inadequate resource complement. Policies pertaining to the national territory must be revisited with the view of harmonizing domestic policies with the Law of the Sea Convention. Vertical integration can be improved by linking sub-national planning mechanisms with national ocean policy formulation and decision-making. The paper concludes that ocean policy coordination through an inter-ministerial body augurs well for integrated ocean management. It recommends for the reestablishment of an inter-agency coordinative mechanism and asserts the need to address the following concerns: (1) the integration and defining of the roles of the sub-national development planning bodies in the national ocean policy planning; and (2) the integration of ocean policy planning process into the national development planning.

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