

Coral Farm: Ecotourism Center for Reefs Restoration & Protection of Marine Environment

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Architect Scissel Sabio Naing
Adviser

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Presented by

Esguerra, Sarah Shayne P.
200501683

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ABSTRACT

The Philippines is a tropical archipelago in Southeast Asia with direct access to some of the most diverse marine life in the world. Because of its prime location in the warm waters of the Pacific, coral reefs are able to grow and increase. Unfortunately, the pristine water that surrounds the country is also under constant strain by both natural and man-made threats. The coral reefs found in the Philippines are rapidly declining in size. It is said that in the Philippines, the reefs have been suffering for the past 30 years. An overwhelming 97% of the coral reefs in the country are threatened.

It is estimated that one-third of the entire world's fish species depend on coral for their existence; that the loss of these reefs will be a disaster for many countries especially within the Coral Triangle. Coral reefs provide food and livelihood to about 850 million people. They also give shoreline protection against tsunami or tidal waves.

Coral reefs can generate millions of dollars in tourism and employment. Not only in fisheries and tourism has reef benefited but also in medical field. Many scientists believe that coral reefs are a 'medicine chests' of the future that would cure cancers.

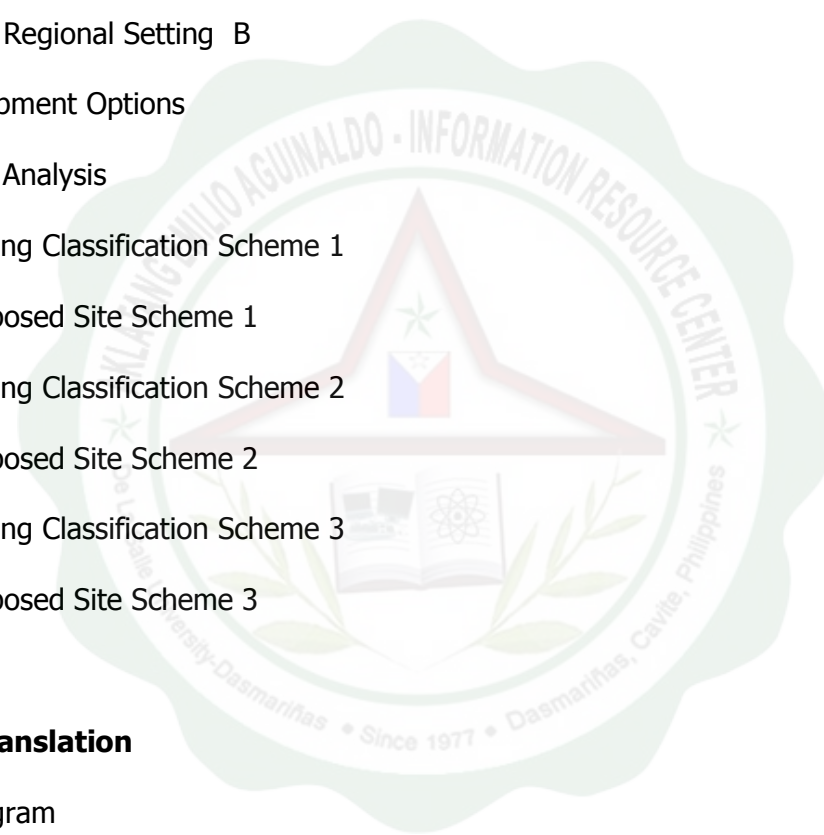
The rapid declining population of the reefs causes the countries affected to panic and to think of methods to prevent these resources to extinction. The Coral farm will be a logistic based facility that accommodates researchers, students, and tourists to learn and explore about reefs and marine environment. It will contribute on restoring the reef by culturing "nurseries" of hard and soft corals. It will repopulate those areas which have been heavily damaged by destructive fishing practices or by coral diseases, and climate change while simultaneously involving local communities with new job opportunities.

Table of Contents

Part 1:	The Problem and its Background	1
Chapter 1.1	General Overview	2
	Introduction	2
	Background of the Study	3
	Statement of the Problem	6
	Project Goals, Objectives and Strategies	13
	Significance of the Study	15
	Scope and Limitation	15
	Assumptions	16
	Conceptual Framework	17
	Definition of Terms	19
	Acronyms	20
Chapter 1.2	Review of Related Literature and Studies	21
	Related Literature	21
	Related Studies / Projects	22

Chapter 1.3	Research Methodology	27
	Research Design	27
Chapter 1.4	Summary of Findings and Analysis	29
	Presentation of Collected Data	30
	Need Analysis	35
Chapter 1.5	Conclusions and Recommendations	43
Part 2:	Research Focus	44
Chapter 2.1	Rationale	44
Chapter 2.2	Principles and Relevance to the Project	45
Chapter 2.3	Application to the Project	45
Part 3:	Site Identification and Analysis	47
Chapter 3.1	Site Selection Process	47
	Site Selection	47
	Site Criteria	51
	Criteria for Site Selection	52
Chapter 3.2	Site Evaluation and Analysis	60

	The International Setting	60
	The National Setting	61
	The Regional Setting A	61
	The Regional Setting B	62
Chapter 3.3	Site Development Options	62
	Site Analysis	63
	Zoning Classification Scheme 1	64
	Proposed Site Scheme 1	65
	Zoning Classification Scheme 2	66
	Proposed Site Scheme 2	67
	Zoning Classification Scheme 3	68
	Proposed Site Scheme 3	69
Part 4:	Architectural Design Translation	70
Chapter 4.1	Design Program	70
	Problem Diagnosis	70
	Design Objectives	70
	Design Criteria	70



	Design Concept	71
	Design Considerations	71
	Space Programming and Allocation	72
	Behavioral Analysis	80
	Functional Zoning	82
	User Analysis	83
	Organizational Structure	84
	Programming Matrix / Diagrams	85
Chapter 4.2	Concept Development	92
	Architectural Concept	92
	Structural Concept	97
	Utility Concept	99
	Synthesis	100
Chapter 4.3	Presentation Drawings	100
	Concept Board	101
	Site Development Plan	102
	The Seascape Restaurant	103
	Administration Building	105

Diving Centre	109
Multipurpose Building	110
Research Centre with Dormitory	113
Underwater Gallery	114
Gaming Centre	115
Manufacturing Facility	118

List of Tables

Part 1: The Problem and its Background

Table No. 1	The Greatest Tsunami Catastrophes – an overview	13
Table No. 2	Guidelines for the Coastal Land-and Sea-Use Zones of Bataan	34
Table No. 3	Needs Analysis	36

Part 2: Research Focus

Part 3: Site Identification and Analysis

Table No. 4	Site Criteria Description	51
Table No. 5	Criteria for Site Selection	52
Table No. 6	Site Evaluation	53
Table No. 7	Zoning Classification Scheme 1	64

Table No. 8	Zoning Classification Scheme 2	66
Table No. 9	Zoning Classification Scheme 3	68

Part 4: Architectural Design Translation

Table No. 10	Space Allocation (Residential)	73
Table No. 11	Space Allocation (Manufacturing)	74
Table No. 12	Space Allocation (Educational)	75
Table No. 13	Space Allocation (Recreational)	76
Table No. 14	Space Allocation (Administrative)	77
Table No. 15	Space Allocation (Research Facility)	78
Table No. 16	Space Allocation (Utilities)	79
Table No. 17	Space Allocation (Parking)	79
Table No. 18	Evolution of Form & Concept	92

List of Figures

Figure No. 1	Coral Triangle	4
Figure No. 2	Reefs at Risk Indicator	6
Figure No. 3	Filipino Workers arranging black corals seized by the customs	6
Figure No. 4	Dead fish and damaged coral as the result of blast fishing	8
Figure No. 5	Climate Change Vulnerability map of Southeast Asia	10

Figure No. 6	Predicted increases in CO ₂ under different IPCC Scenarios	10
Figure No. 7	Historical Occurrences in the Pacific Ocean	12
Figure No. 8	Historical Occurrences in the Indian Ocean	12
Figure No. 9	Macro Conceptual Framework	17
Figure No. 10	Micro Conceptual Framework	17
Figure No. 11	Coraleye Multipurpose Hall	23
Figure No. 12	Coral Reefs Preview in National Museum of Marine Biology Aquarium	24
Figure No. 13	Underwater World Interior	25
Figure No. 13	Map of Bataan emphasizing Morong	31
Figure No. 14	Coral Farming in North Borneo	45
Figure No. 15	Coral Reefs in various forms and colors	46
Figure No. 16	Interior Design given an impression of sea-and-sky set up	46
Figure No. 17	Hydnophora Microconos - Reef Systems Coral Farm	47
Figure No. 18	Tsunami Prone Areas in the Philippines	48
Figure No. 19	Tsunami Hazard Map of Bataan Province	49
Figure No. 20	Tsunami Hazard Map of Batangas Province	49
Figure No. 21	Batangas Map – SITE 1 & SITE 2	54
Figure No. 22	Morong Bataan Map – SITE 3	55

Figure No. 23	Site Shape	56
Figure No. 24	Coastal Habitats and Resources Map, Bataan – SITE 2	57
Figure No. 25	Morong Bataan Tourism Map – SITE 2	57
Figure No. 26	Coral Reef Restoration and Protection Zone,Bataan-SITE 2	58
Figure No. 27	Province of Bataan Municipality of Morong Coastal- and Sea-use Zoning Map	58
Figure No. 28	General Land Use Plan of Laiya Batangas	59
Figure No. 29	General Zoning Map of Laiya Batangas	59
Figure No. 30	Map of Asia	60
Figure No. 31	Map of the Philippines	61
Figure No. 32	Central Luzon Map	61
Figure No. 33	CALABARZON Map	62
Figure No. 34	Approved Site – Morong, Bataan	62
Figure No. 35	Site Analysis	63
Figure No. 36	Scheme 1	64
Figure No. 37	Space Allocation Scheme 1	65
Figure No. 38	Scheme 2	66
Figure No. 39	Space Allocation Scheme 2	67

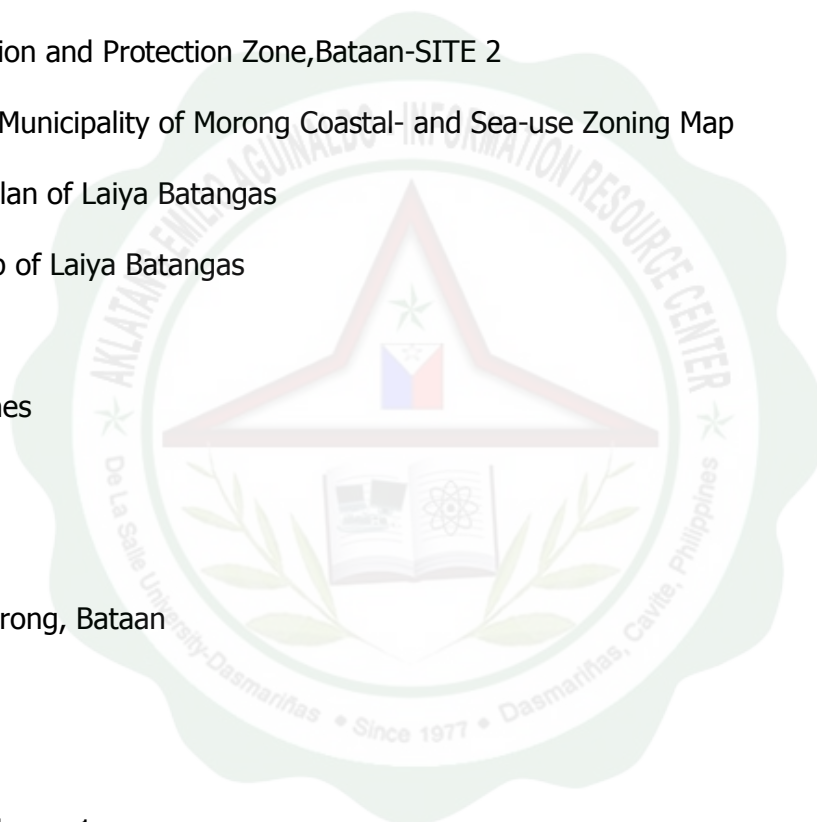


Figure No. 40	Scheme 3	68
Figure No. 41	Space Allocation Scheme 3	69
Figure No. 42	Guest Behavior (Walk-in)	80
Figure No. 43	Administrative & Staff Behavior	80
Figure No. 44	Guest Behavior (Stay-in)	81
Figure No. 45	Functional Zoning	82
Figure No. 46	Organizational Chart	84
Figure No. 47	Macro Site Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	85
Figure No. 48	Macro Site Adjacency Matrix Diagram	85
Figure No. 49	Underwater Gallery Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	86
Figure No. 50	Underwater Gallery Adjacency Matrix Diagram	86
Figure No. 51	Restaurant Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	87
Figure No. 52	Restaurant Adjacency Matrix Diagram	87
Figure No. 53	Diving Centre Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	88
Figure No. 54	Diving Centre Adjacency Matrix Diagram	88
Figure No. 55	Multipurpose Centre Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	89
Figure No. 56	Multipurpose Centre Adjacency Matrix Diagram	89
Figure No. 57	Administration Building Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	89

Figure No. 58	Administration Building Adjacency Matrix Diagram	89
Figure No. 59	Research Centre with Dormitory Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	90
Figure No. 60	Research Centre with Dormitory Adjacency Matrix Diagram	90
Figure No. 61	Gaming Centre with Spa Functional-Inter-relationship-Circulatory Diagram	91
Figure No. 62	Gaming Centre with Spa Adjacency Matrix Diagram	91
Figure No. 63	Force Applied in Space Framing Diagram	97
Figure No. 64	Construction Project using Space Framing	97
Figure No. 65	Sample Structure that uses Space Framing: The Eden Project	98
Figure No. 66	Reverse Osmosis	99

