Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

Transcript of the official document

1. Country: Philippines

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4. Name and address of compiler:
Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau
Quezon Avenue
Diliman
Quezon City

5. Name of wetlands: Olango Island

6. Date of Ramsar designation: 01/07/1994

7. Geographical coordinates: 10° 14', 10° 17' N; 124° 02', 124° 04' E

8. General location:
Located between Cebu and Bohol Islands 4km, east of Mactan Island and 15km east of Cebu City, Cebu Province

9. Area: 5,800ha (including about 2,900ha of intertidal flats)

10. Wetland type: 03, 05, 06 and 07

11. Altitude: Sea level

12. Overview:
A low-lying island off the east coast of Mactan Island, with an extensive coralline intertidal sandflat to the south with some mangrove areas and seagrass beds offshore coral reefs and islands.

13. Physical features:
Humid tropical climate with the seasons not very pronounced, relatively dry during October-November and April-June, and wet for the remainder of the year (Type 111). The island is partly sheltered from the southeast monsoon and trade winds by Bohol and Mactan Islands but is open to the northwest monsoon and associated cyclonic storms. Soils of Olango has not been classified. However, nearby Mactan Island which has a similar Carcar limestone base has both blackish Faraon Clay and reddish Bolinao Clay. The island is composed of two lithologic units, the Plio-Pleistocene Carcar Formation and the Quarternary Alluvium, the youngest lithologic unit. Freshwater cells are unsanitary open wells and restricted to be the centre of the island. Water from the public wells is not enough to support the daily needs of the people, thus many settle for brackish water as drinking water. Those at the far-clung barangays and sitios where daily water procurement is a burden, resort to rainwater harvesting for storage and use.

14. Ecological features:
Mangrove forest dominated by Avicennia alba along the seaward edge and in the accreting zone. Rhizophora apiculata is common along the edges of the forest and there are some patches of Sonneratia alba and Lumnitzara racemosa. There are plantations of Cocos nucifera and a few agricultural crops in the interior of the island.

15. Land tenure/ownership of:
Mostly state owned, with a few privately owned plots of land near some of the beaches. The island comes under the jurisdiction of Lapulapu City, Province of Cebu.

16. Conservation measures taken:
Some intertidal areas have been replanted with Rhizophora spp. and other areas are being considered for rehabilitation as part of a Government Scheme. In April 1988, the District council on Olono Island enacted an ordinance to ban hunting on the island. Declared as a Wildlife Sanctuary under Proclamation No. 903 on May 4 1992.

17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented:
Management plan and several project proposals have been prepared and submitted to Japan Wildlife Research Centre.

18. Current land use:
(a) site: no information available
(b) surroundings/catchment: The local communities depend totally on the coastal resources for their livelihood. Cleaning of the flats for sea urchins and commercial shells and fishing are most important. Utilisation of mangroves for firewood is also carried out.

19. Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects:
There is extremely heavy pressure on the coastal resources, with serious over-exploitation. Most of the mangrove trees are low-growing and scrubby due to continuous cutting for firewood. There is coral gathering for export which although illegal is carried out, with offshore dynamite and cyanide fishing. There is heavy hunting pressure on shorebirds by organised hunting parties from Cebu, especially on the large species such as Numenius arquata.

20. Hydrological and physical values:
Freshwater cells are unsanitary open wells and restricted to the centre of the island. Water from public wells is not enough to support the daily needs of the people, thus, many settle for brackish water as drinking water. Those who can afford, buy fresh water from vendors while those who could not, walk to the source and carry water home. Those at the far-clung barangays and sites where daily water procurement is a burden, resort to rainwater harvesting for storage and use.

21. Social and cultural values:
Olango Island has a total human population of: 20,439 with an inclusion of 3,792 household as of May 1990. Major economic activities are fishing and farming. Some are involved in lantern making, shell craft collection and entrepreneurship of aquarium fish, mat-making and livestock raising. Fishing trips in the area is 28 times a month or the equivalent of almost everyday. During seasonal occasions fishermen have to go as far as Palawan and nearby places such as cordova, Caubian Island, Bohol and Camotes Island. Fishing gears used motorised pumpboat, pedalled bota, hook and line, fish nets and some resort into destructive collection through the use of cyanide or dynamite. Cassava, which thrives on the poorest soil and corn are given about equal importance as major crops. Other agricultural products are camote, banana and green vegetables. Crop rotation is being practiced on 58.24% of Olango parcels and with this rotation, cassava and corn are being planted. The land is planted with coconut, corn horse radish, giant ipil-ipil and cassava while the other areas are used for offshore fishing and harvesting of some marine edible shells and seaweeds. Portion of the coastal mangrove and the adjacent intertidal areas are being used as docking sites for outriggered boats.

22. Noteworthy fauna:
One of the most important staging areas for migratory shorebirds in the central Philippines. Over 10,000 shorebirds have been recorded at one time, and the total number using the site may be as many as 50,000. Numenius arquata is particularly common. Upto 48 Asian Dowitchers Limpodromus semipalmatus were recorded in autumn 1987, making Olango Island the most important site for this rare species in the Philippines. The island is also an important staging area for Numenius madagascariensis and Calidris tenuirostris (376 autumn 1987). Other waterbirds occurring in significant numbers include Egretta garzetta, E. alba and Anas luzonica.

23. Noteworthy flora:
Olango Island ban relatively few plant species and they are sparsely distributed. 27 mangrove and mangrove associated species were identified by the IBNR and AWB-Philippines. Rhizophora mucrenata is the dominant species followed by Avicennia alba and Sonneratia caseolaris. Osbornia ectodonta is the most common at the waterbird roosting site interspersed with Lumnitzera littorea and Lumnitzera racemosa. Other plant species are scattered throughout the area. The marine algae grow

among the mangroves and in the rocky substrate on the intertidal and subtidal areas. While extensive seagrass occur on the lower intertidal flats and on subtidal areas of the sanctuary boundary. The most commonly observed are Ulva sp., Enteromorpha sp., Cladohora sp., Bostrychia sp., Codium sp., and Gracillaria sp. for the algae and Buhalus sp. and Helodule sp. and Thalassia sp. for seagrasses.

24. Current scientific research and facilities:
Preliminary surveys were carried out by the Asian Wetland Bureau, Philippines, between August and November 1987 and early 1988. The University of San Carlos maintains research facilities on the nearby island of Mactan.

25. Current conservation education: No information

26. Current recreation and tourism: No information

27. Management authority:

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
Visayas Avenue
Diliman
Quezon City

28. Jurisdiction:
Region 7, Department of Environment and Natural Resources

29. Bibliographical references:
A directory of Philippine Wetlands 1990. Vol 1.
A Directory of Asian Wetlands.

30. Reasons for inclusion:
The choice of the proposed Olango Wildlife Sanctuary is based on the fact that it is one of the most important areas for migratory waterbirds in the Philippines. The high bird numbers indicate that the island is being utilised by migratory birds as staging or wintering ground. The inter-tidal flats serve as foraging grounds for the birds indicating the area's high productivity. The highest ground among the mangrove stands within the Sanctuary also serve as roosting sites for the birds at high tide.