



ASSESSMENT OF THE MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS OF HUNDRED ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK (HINP) IN ALAMINOS CITY PANGASINAN, PHILIPPINES



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INTRODUCTION

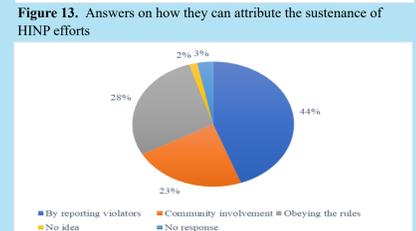
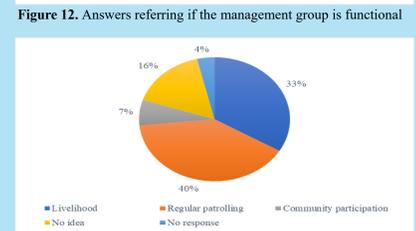
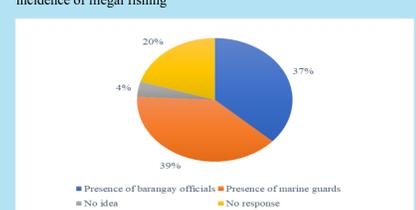
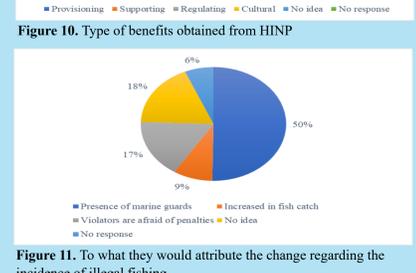
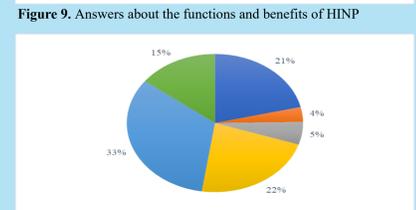
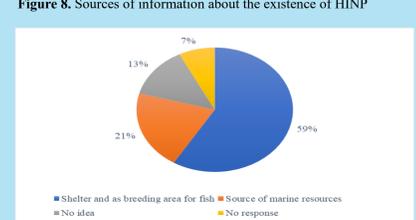
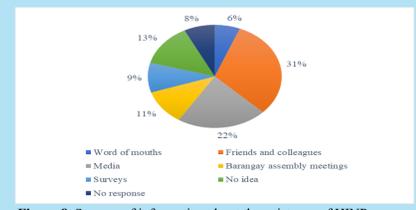
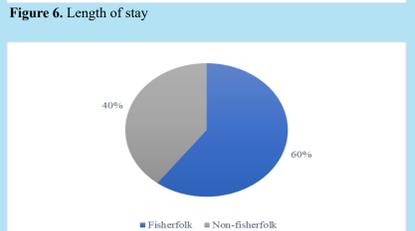
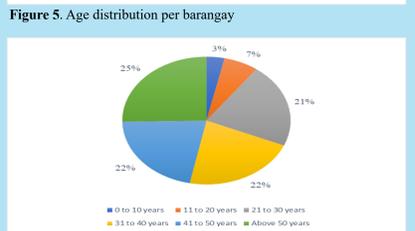
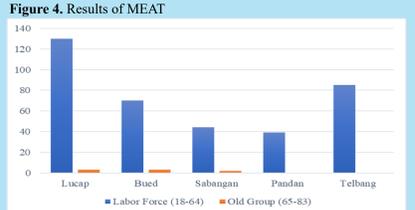
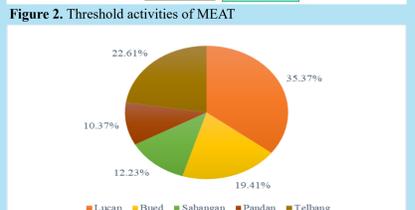
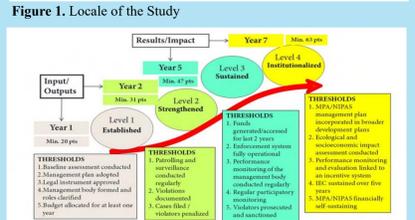
This study aims to present the management of the Hundred Islands National Park as a marine protected area using the Management Effectiveness Assessment Tool (MEAT). The purpose of the MEAT is to evaluate governance in terms of enforcement, implementation, and maintenance. However, in the sense of Philippine governance approaches, marine protected area (MPA) management encompasses physical management of the MPA and direct and indirect uses, risks, individuals, and the systematic relationship between people and resources.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted within the barangays of Lucap, Bued, Sabangan, Pandan, Telbang in the City of Alaminos, Pangasinan (Fig. 1). The assessment of HINP is through on-site assessment and interviews of eight key informants involved in the management of HINP. As an evaluation tool, the MEAT presents a compilation of parameters (Fig. 2) that allow effective management of MPAs by combining various institutions and non-governmental organizations' experiences. The community perception survey was conducted within households and public areas near the MPA with proper coordination (Fig. 3). The number of respondents needed was determined using Cochran's sample size with a 95% confidence level. Data from primary and secondary sources were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Inferential analysis was used for observations and discussions. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means were used to describe the respondent's profile, including socio-economic and biogeographic settings from management activities.

MEAT RESULTS

Based on the MEAT results, HINP met the requirements to achieve all levels 1 to 4. Focusing on the management criteria (Fig. 4), HINP was able to perfect the scores in terms of their management plan, management body, legal instrument, community participation, monitoring, evaluation, and financing except for information and education and communication (IEC) and enforcement. According to some of its constituents, these criteria still need to be strengthened to manage the HINP despite the high scores.



RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The age is subdivided into two groups: labor force (14-64) and old groups (65 years and above) (Fig. 5). The most significant proportion of respondents represented (25%) of the sample who stayed in Alaminos City above 50 years (Fig. 6). They mainly were fisherfolks (60%) who made a living from fishing and boating (Fig. 7). Non-fisherfolk stakeholders (40%) include ecologist and restaurant operators and government and private employees, laborers, tricycle drivers, construction workers, and homemakers.

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION RESULTS

The community perception survey gauged the knowledge of the community regarding HINP. Of the total number of respondents, 31% knew the existence of HINP, mainly through their friends and colleagues (Fig. 8). 59% see the protected area as a shelter and breeding for fish (Fig. 9). In terms of the main benefits obtained from HINP (Fig. 10), 33% have no idea about any benefits from HINP. 50% answer that marine guards' presence is attributed to the change in illegal fishing incidence (Fig. 11). 39% answer that marine guards' presence shows how the management group is functional (Fig. 12). 40% answer that if there is regularly patrolling around HINP, HINP efforts could be sustained (Fig. 13). 44% would support the continued management of HINP by reporting violators (Fig. 14).

CONCLUSIONS

The findings showed that using MEAT to determine and analyze the effectiveness of existing management methods and processes in the HINP was appropriate in highlighting important threshold indicators and processes that help promote and achieve management effectiveness and outcomes. It also helped determine the management focus that needs to be improved by the HINP-PAMB, providing the HINP with information with which to implement adaptive management approaches.

The HINP got an excellent rating based on the MEAT results. It indicates that the HINP-PAMB and the LGU of Alaminos directly managing the MPA have done a great job of ensuring the integrity of the HINP.

The majority of Alaminos City residents have positive to neutral perceptions of the HINP and its impact and importance in Alaminos City. The city's government remains committed to environmental conservation and has put in place mechanisms to deal with the influx of tourists, urbanization, and the increasing issue of solid waste disposal.

In conclusion, to ensure sustainable utilization of natural resources and adequate conservation of protected areas, knowledge and perceptions must be investigated and considered in developing policies and park management strategies.