

Welcome Remarks



Good morning, everyone and welcome to UPV Tacloban College and to the **3rd State of Mangrove Summit for Central and Eastern Visayas**. We are very glad that you made us a partner to this important discussion on the state of mangrove forests in Visayas together with the Oscar M. Lopez Center (OML Center), the Ateneo de Manila University (AdMU), and the Guiuan Development Foundation Inc. (GDFI). We also welcome the paper presenters from the different local government units of Bohol, Cebu, Leyte, Southern Leyte, Samar, Eastern Samar, and Northern Samar, from Ormoc City, Palompon, Leyte, and from Southeast Samar PO Consortium – Lawaan, Eastern Samar.

Dioscoro Melana (one of the authors of *The Handbook of Mangrove Management*) described mangroves as the rainforest of the sea. Mangroves, according to Melana, provide not only economic but also ecological benefits, such as the following: (a) they are a good source of products like alcohol, medicine, tannin, charcoal, timber, and housing materials; (b) they support fisheries production and aquaculture; (c) they provide nursery grounds, shelter, and food for fish and other sea creature; (d) they protect coastal communities from storm surges, waves, tides, and currents; (e) they act as carbon sink by reducing organic pollution along shore areas; (f) they serve as recreational grounds for wildlife enthusiasts; and (g) they stabilize the coastline by reducing erosion. Mangroves in the Philippines are, however, under threat both by natural dangers and man-made extravagances. There is a need, therefore, to mitigate the destruction of mangroves in the country.

We hope that through the three technical presentations and nine presentations on the status of mangroves by the different local government units you would be able to achieve your purpose of organizing this summit, which is to come up with a plan of action to improve mangrove management.

Congratulations for coming up with another mangrove summit.

Have a wonderful day.

VIRGILDO E. SABALO, PhD

Dean

University of the Philippines Visayas,
Tacloban College