

## State of the Mangrove in **LEYTE**

*The Editors, based on inputs from Leyte participants*

### **I. Introduction**

Leyte is one of the six provinces in Eastern Visayas. It has 31 coastal municipalities with a shoreline length of around 511 km and a coastal area of around 1,724,679 ha. Fishing is the primary source of income and food of the coastal residents. The conversion of mangroves to fishponds and other coastal infrastructures threaten the long-term survival of mangroves in the province. Other issues are indiscriminate cutting for firewood and the increasing vulnerability to rising sea level. In 2013, the province experienced the onslaught of Super Typhoon (ST) Yolanda (Haiyan). It devastated the province, specifically its capital, Tacloban City.

#### ***Importance of mangroves***

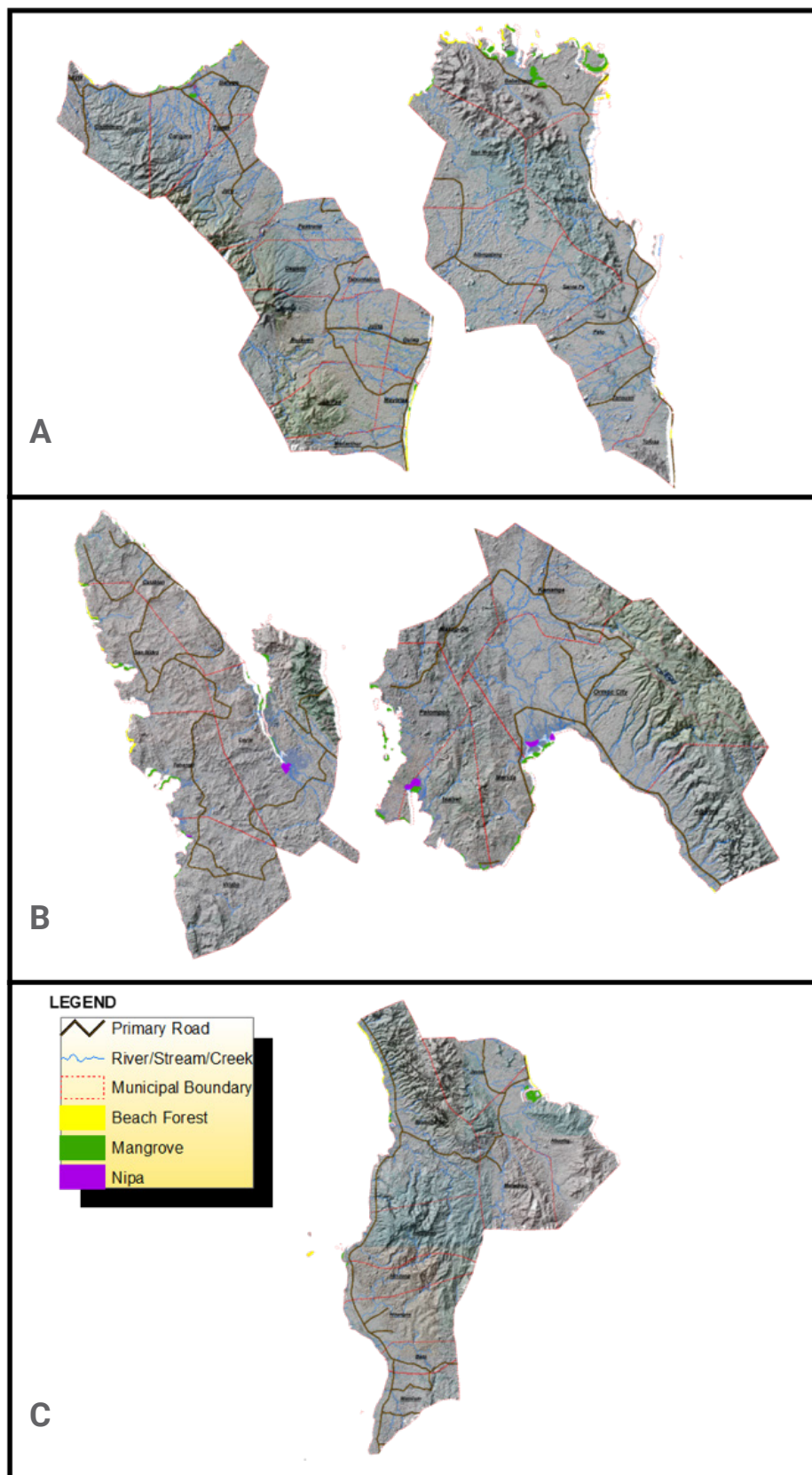
Mangroves are important in providing several ecological services such as shoreline protection and erosion control, and production of prawns, crabs, shellfishes, and fishes. These products serve as sources of food and income for coastal communities. The recognition on the importance of mangroves motivated the province to implement mangrove rehabilitation program.

### **II. Status of Mangroves**

The province has 5,686 ha of mangrove stands. It has a mangrove protected area, the Cuatro Islas Protected Landscapes and Seascapes (CILPS) located in the municipalities of Inopacan and Hindang. Several mangrove planting projects were planned and implemented.

The PENRO Leyte implemented the Mangrove and Beach Forest Rehabilitation led and supervised by three major cities of the province – Baybay, Ormoc, and Palo. The goal of the project was to restore/rehabilitate 2,048 ha of mangroves. The project was implemented in September 2017 and will end in November 2018.

Through the supervision of CENRO Palo, Districts 1 and 2 should be able to accomplish 32 % of the goal of the province. They will rehabilitate around 659 ha of mangroves and beach forests (comprised of nipa, 4 % or 2 ha; beach forest, 26 % or 173 ha; and mangrove, 70 % or 459 ha; **Fig. 1A**).



**Figure 1.** Mangrove distribution in Leyte, in Districts 1 & 2 (A); Districts 3 & 4 (B); and District 5 (C).

The CENRO Ormoc together with the municipal governments from Districts 3 and 4 should be able to accomplish 32 % of the goal of the province. They need to rehabilitate around 1,237 ha of mangroves and beach forests (comprised of nipa, 17 % or 205 ha; beach forest, 5 % or 63 ha; and mangrove, 78 % or 969 ha; **Fig. 1B**).

Through the supervision of CENRO Baybay, District 5 should be able to accomplish 8 % of the goal of the province. They need to plant around 152 ha of mangroves and beach forests (comprised of nipa, 23 % or 35 ha; beach forest, 24 % or 37 ha; and mangrove, 53 % or 80 ha; **Fig. 1C**).

### III. Mangrove Protection and Management

The provincial government currently implements their own mangrove rehabilitation project in Cancabato Bay. The project aims to rehabilitate 70 ha of mangroves in the bay in 14 months (September 2017 to November 2018). The funding (PHP 28.8 million) comes from the budget of the DENR Region 8 in partnership with Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and Environmental Management Bureau (EMB).

The project is monitored by the provincial government. The communities are benefiting from this project as they are hired in the planting and monitoring activities.

### IV. Summary and Recommendations

Leyte experienced damages from ST Yolanda in 2013. This experience made the local government units recognize the need to conserve and restore mangroves. Several mangrove rehabilitation projects were already implemented and some are still on-going. Many failed due to improper implementation, but some succeeded. For successful implementation of the projects, there is a need for proper coordination among government units in the documentation and monitoring of the projects. Through this proper coordination, best practices can be shared to communities. This could then help to attain a more resilient and sustainable community in the future.

### V. References

Survey form filled by PENRO Leyte.  
 Presentation last Mangrove Summit.