

'Sibol' project boosts environment protection in far-flung rural areas

A DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) project that estimates the economic value of the country's natural resources is seen to boost environmental protection and will support economic activity in far-flung rural areas.

Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAid) called Sustainable Interventions for Biodiversity, Oceans, and Landscapes (Sibol) has elevated the Philippines' appreciation for natural resources and biodiversity protection. The project cost is P1.1 billion.

Sibol has trained Filipino natural resource managers on how to properly account for environment-provided benefits.

A total of 275 government staff and researchers from Philippine public universities has completed a three-month training that will support the government's promotion of economic growth through the conservation of the country's ecosystems.

The training serves as a foundation for incorporating environmental valuation into the design of economic plans at the local level. The Philippines' capability to quantify the economic value of its natural resources will be applied in natural capital accounting. Natural resource managers and researchers from the DENR, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, National Economic and Development Authority, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, and six public universities learned various methods for measuring the value of benefits derived from the environment such as food, water and fuel, soil conservation, and coastal protection.

According to the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the Philippines is one of 17 megadiverse countries in the world, which account for 70 percent of the entire planet's species of flora and fauna.

Sibol is a five-year natural resources management and biodiversity conservation project.