International Maritime Conference 2013 participants visit JBLFMU Ecological Park

Participants in the International Maritime Conference, which was hosted by JBLFMU-Arevalo on January 21-23, 2013, visited the JBLFMU Ecological Park on the third day of the conference to explore and experience the varied endowments of nature being enhanced and developed by the university. The eco-tour was facilitated by the JBLFMU CES officer with the help of ten student volunteers from the JBLFMU-Molo Tourism Department.

Spread out over a 45-hectare property of land and water, the ecological park was a refreshing treat to the guests from around the country and other parts of the world. This built environment, which is part of the university’s endowment to a clean and healthy atmosphere and habitat for all living beings now and in future generations, showcases the marine sanctuary, mangroves, butterfly habitat, mari-culture-pond, seagrass site, camp site, swimming pool, wading lagoon, coral caves, sunset park and reforested hills thus making it a living museum.

JBLFMU seagrass monitoring program now in its fifth year

The seagrass monitoring program of JBLFMU is the only monitoring site in the Visayas. It is a collaborative project of JBLFMU-System, JBLFMU-Molo and JBLFMU-Arevalo. Three research outputs have been produced in the five years of monitoring, to wit: Species Composition of Seagrass at Igang Bay, Nueva Valencia, Province of Guimaras; Growth Trends of Seagrass Species in Four Year Study of Igang Bay, Guimaras, Philippines; Seagrass Diversity on Western
and Eastern Sites of Igang Bay, Guimaras Philippines. These studies were presented in different research fora in national and international conferences and published in different research journals.

JBLFMU CES Staff and CIDA interns conduct survey on the Fishing Conditions at Sitio, Laktawan, Poblacion Nueva Valencia, Guimaras

As part of the activities of the Igang Bay Marine Sanctuary management, the JBLFMU CES staff, together with CIDA interns Lindsay Sutton and Oliver Dumville, conducted an assessment on the fishing conditions at Sitio, Laktawan, Poblacion Nueva Valencia, Guimaras on January 26, 2013.

Information on the current conditions of their fishing activity, which is the main source of income for most people living there, was gathered. The main goals of the survey were to: (1) find out the target species of the fishermen, (2) estimate the annual fishing impact that a community has on its resources (fish stock decline/increase from previous years), (3) determine incidences of by-catch of non-target species, and (4) determine whether or not they support the marine sanctuary.

The results showed that majority of the respondents indicated that they have to travel a further distance than the previous year in order to reach their quotas. This may imply that the inshore fish stocks are depleted, forcing them to spend more money on fuel and more time at sea.

With regard to fishing gear, some respondents reported the use of two types of gillnet. This may indicate a lack of regulation.

Although certain species may be ranked as the most “valuable” species, there are not necessarily the most targeted ones. This is likely due to the idea that rarer species are more in demand and have a higher market. We speculate that
such species may not be the easiest to catch, making them less targeted than others.

Eighty-five percent of the respondents reported a decrease in the amount of “small fish” obtained in their catch. This is contradictory to other results which indicate a decline in fish catch compared to the previous year. A lower catch rate of “small fish” would imply more abundant fish populations. However, respondents insisted that their catch rates had decreased in comparison to the previous. This contradiction may be a result of miscomprehension of the survey question. It is likely that the meaning of “small fish” was unclear. Respondents may have interpreted it as “small species of fish,” and not necessarily “juvenile fish.”

The researchers likewise conducted a small fish measurement survey at the Brgy. Igang local market. Some species are caught and sold exclusively in its juvenile life stage. The fish locally known as “aloy” corresponds to the juvenile form of the Skipjack tuna. In addition, several other species were found to be sold at sizes below their respective sizes at maturity. Conversely, one species was sold at a size much larger than its documented size at maturity. Further investigation into the statuses of these populations is recommended.

The worsening of fish conditions may indicate an ecological threat to fish stocks such as the spread of disease or other physical ailments. It may also indicate small population sizes affected by inbreeding and an accumulation of harmful mutations.

By-catch rates were found to be considerably high for all 4 species in question. The researchers recommend increased regulation of by-catch rates of these ecologically important species.

All respondents showed support for JBLFMU’s marine sanctuary in Igang Bay. However, questions on the advantages and disadvantages of the marine sanctuary demonstrated lack of understanding of the purpose and effectiveness of marine protected areas. It is recommended that information sessions be held to ensure a deeper understanding.

Socio-economic information may provide managers with an overview of conditions in the local community at that point in time and to help them design or better focus some proposed short-term management interventions. In addition, it can serve as baseline information that becomes the basis for future comparisons and for an ongoing monitoring programme to support adaptive management.
The results will be a great help to JBLFMU and LGU to come up with actions or plan related to the protection of the IBMS. (Mary Mar G. Esmaña, Glaiza G. Tabulinar, Lindsay Sutton and Oliver Dumville)

Coop General Assembly Held

A general assembly of the PNVMPc headed by Chairman of the Board Mr. Johnny Galve was held on February 10, 2013 to discuss matters concerning the operations of the cooperative. The major topics discussed included: the 2011 and 2012 operations; the new initiatives in 2012 and beyond; approval of actions, decisions and management operation of PNVMPC for 2012; audited financial statements; the acceptance of general assembly of the financial statements; the renewal of the group life Insurance of the members and the election of the three members to the board.

Cash dividends and patronage refunds of the members were distributed at the end of the assembly.
Community Needs Assessment at Sitio Laktawan

A community needs assessment was conducted on February 26, 2013 at Sitio Laktawan, Brgy. Poblacion Nueva Valencia, Guimaras by the CES office with the help of the CIDA interns. The results of the survey were used as basis for: (1) organizing a core group in the community, (2) knowing their needs, (3) working closely with the community as a team, (4) educating them on assuming responsibility for their core group, (5) providing them community extension programs that are relevant to their needs for empowerment and self reliance.

Capacity Building, Leadership Training and Values Inculcation Workshop for CES Implementers and Volunteers

To be community extension implementers is not a simple job. It is a vocation, a mission. To be an effective community worker, one should demonstrate professional commitment, direction, motivation and maturity in handling a community work.

To equip the CES implementers and volunteers with skills in handling extension work, the JBLFMU CES office organized a two-day training entitled Capacity Building, Leadership Training and Values Inculcation Workshop for CES Implementers and Volunteers at JBLFMU Ecological Park on March 4-5, 2013. The training was participated in by the five units of JBLFMU, namely: JBLFMU System, JBLF-training Center, JBLFMU-Molo, JBLFMU- Arevalo and JBLCF-Bacolod.

Mr. Eric Divinagracia, Artistic Director of University of San Agustin Little Theater and Arts Administrator of the same university, was the resource person. The training, which consisted of group dynamics, lectures, discussion groups,
role plays, and workshops, aimed to orient the participants on the basic principles and processes of working together in groups or teams.

CES Office conducts Strategic Planning

After the implementation and evaluation of the five-year plan of JBLFMU CES SY 2008-2013, the CES personnel of the entire system went to JBLFMU Ecological Park on March 7-8, 2013 to do the strategic planning for the next five years of SY 2013-2018.

This will be a new challenge for the extension implementers and volunteers to make something difference in the lives of the people in the communities that they served.

JBLFMU-CES officers attend NYC Stakeholders' Consultation for the Commission’s Budget for 2014 in Cebu City

To become aware of what is happening in today’s world about the programs and projects of the National Youth Commission (NYC) the JBLFMU CES Officers attends the consultation on budget 2014 at Cebu City.

Over a hundred youth leaders, volunteers, members of youth-serving organizations and other stakeholders attended and participated in the consultation. The said consultation aims to institutionalize participatory budgeting
and broaden constructive partnership between the commission and its stakeholders.

Through this forum, the youth will be encouraged to participate and exercise their rights in the national budgeting process as it empowers young people and instills in them the value of responsible and participatory citizenship.

A Forum on CIDA Intern’s Report on their Internship Experience at JBLFMU Held

JBLFMU Research and Extension Office held a forum on April 3, 2013 that featured the CIDA interns’ report on their internship experience at JBLFMU. Interns Oliver Dumville and Lindsay Sutton presented their research output entitled “Fisherfolk Indicators: a Survey Questionnaire on Fishing Conditions in Barangay Poblacion, Nueva Valencia, Guimaras, Philippines”. Another presentation was their observations/learnings from the Filipino Culture.

The forum was attended by the JBLFMU Executive Council personnel and staff. The forum further raised the level of awareness of JBLFMU personnel about the university’s partnership with CIDA and the contribution of this partnership to the University through the interns’ involvement particularly in the Research and Extension Office.
PNVMPC going five years

The Poblacion Nueva Valencia Multi-Purpose Cooperative (PNVMPC), a project of JBLFMU Community Extension Services, is now on its fifth year of operations. The cooperative was established as one of the alternative livelihood projects when the Igang Bay Marine Sanctuary (IBMS) was put up to help local fishermen who may experience a temporary setback in their earnings while on the early operation of the IBMS.

To date the cooperative has an authorized capital of 3 million pesos whose 127 members have availed of loans to finance their livelihood projects that include pig fattening, sari-sari store, vending, all purpose loan and the like.

Since it started in 2009, the PNVMPC has had the following programs and projects, to wit: Lending program— to finance the livelihood projects of the members; Cooperative Store and Canteen— serves clients of the training center and other guests; the Cooperative Assurance Center (CAC) — caters to various insurances, e.g. fire, group and life, house insurance, land transportation insurance and others. Moreover, the PNVMPC has provided regular employment to five local residents as well as part-time jobs to other locals in the operation of the coop.

The JBLFMU Community Extension Services also provides seminars and trainings for the members and officers of PNVMPC. With the full support of the University, the Municipal Local Government Unit and with the ingenuity of the officers and members, the future of the cooperative looks bright.