Title: Co-management in the Assessment of Ragay Gulf, Philippines

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Abstract: Ragay Gulf is one of the 19 critical waters of the Philippines where a socioeconomic assessment was conducted in the Fisheries Resources Management Program of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources with support from the Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation. Public participation and involvement was done in the coastal municipalities of Ragay Gulf using stakeholder analysis, institutional assessment, resource mapping, and problem identification. Prior to that, a training on these field methods was conducted for the community participants. This training is part of the effort to develop local experts in the area and ensure the continuity of the monitoring activities. The participants identified the stakeholders themselves whom they perceived to have impacts in Ragay Gulf and formulated measures to mitigate the negative impacts. They also identified the institutions working in the area and their positive and negative influences. Resources mapping was done by plotting the location of various coastal habitats and resource users in the barangay. Problem identifying and ranking of the major fishery issues and general concerns in the coastal communities was also accomplished. These methodologies are now being used by the community participants to monitor and assess the activities in their areas, and in policy formulation.