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Ecosystem based sustainable business development for coastal communities in the Coral Triangle

Key words: marine and coastal ecosystems, sustainable livelihoods, small-scale fisheries, responsible tourism

Abstract:

The ecosystems in the Coral Triangle Marine Area located in the western Pacific Ocean are under threat from overfishing, unsustainable development, destructive fishing practices and climate change. The Coral Triangle is considered to be the world's epicentre for marine biodiversity and its biological resources sustain over 120 million inhabitants. For coastal communities in this region, economic development must include a delicate balance between protecting marine biodiversity and maintaining a sustainable and direct access to ecosystem services. Aimed towards addressing the socio-economic challenge of coral reef fisheries decline this study is based on Selayar Island in South Sulawesi Province in eastern Indonesia, and examines how to link local economies to coastal ecosystem services through mutually reinforcing pathways and industry sectors. We look at the symbiotic pathways of sustainable small-scale fisheries, responsible tourism and shorter value chains to enhance primary income and support local livelihoods through value capture and sustainability. This presentation presents results from preliminary analysis of opportunities to strengthen local economic growth, community wellbeing and sustainable environmental management. The findings from this study offer guidance for ecosystem-based business development initiatives in coastal communities that address both the impacts of human activities and the need to sustain or restore the goods and services that are generated by healthy coastal ecosystems.