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Presented by:

Atty. Maria Victoria V. Jasmin
Undersecretary
Philippine Department of Tourism
Presentation Outline

I. Background Features on Philippine Nature
II. Ecotourism Strategy
III. Ecotourism Standards
IV. Two (2) Philippine Ecotourism Sites
V. Challenges of Ecotourism Development
The Philippines

Background Features on Ecotourism

- Regarded as one of the top 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world.
- Where the 2nd largest reef in the world is located, the Apo Reef.
- Center of marine fish biodiversity and the home of the most diversified marine ecosystem in the world.
The Philippines

• 98% of the country’s reef are threatened
• 70% of the mangroves have been lost to fish ponds.
• As an example of peak diversity and endemism, there is ample justification to prioritize the Philippines for conservation.
Ecotourism Strategy

• In 1999, Executive Order No. 111 – “Establishing the Guidelines for Ecotourism Development in the Philippine” was formulated.

• Provided an integrated management plan and comprehensive direction for the development and promotion of ecotourism in the Philippines.
The Philippines

Ecotourism Standards

• Provides and establishes a set of standards to operationalize the concept and principles of ecotourism
• Includes a set of criteria for assessment which serves as a manual for ecotourism operators and as a basis for recognizing best practices and methods for ensuring quality visitor experience.
The Philippines

Ecotourism Products which have developed Ecotourism Standards are:

- Ecotour
- Ecolodge
- Ecotour Facility
- Ecoguide
• An ASEAN Green Hotel is a hotel which is environmentally friendly and adopts energy conservation measures based on certain standards set by the ASEAN.

• One of the six ASEAN Tourism Standards that the ten ASEAN member states have considered essential for helping ASEAN to be a quality single destination.
The Philippines

2 Prime Ecotourism Sites

- PUERTO PRINCESA UNDERGROUND RIVER
- DONSOL WHALE SHARK INTERACTION PROGRAM
The Philippines

PUERTO PRINCESA UNDERGROUND RIVER
A World Heritage Site inscribed by the UNESCO in 1999, the Puerto Princesa Underground River has a unique biodiversity and valuable scientific, archaeological and geological treasures unparalleled in Asia.

It was recently proclaimed as one of the New7Wonders of Nature by an international organization together with Amazon River, Halong Bay, Iguazu Falls, Jeju Island, Komodo Island and Table Mountain.
PUERTO PRINCESA UNDERGROUND RIVER
A natural wonder which features an 8.2 kilometer navigable underground river

Reputed to be the longest navigable underground river in the world, that winds through a spectacular cave before emptying out into the West Philippine Sea.

It river flows within a deep cavern under rugged limestone and marble cliffs.

Within the awesome recesses of the cave, one winds through the tunnel aboard a paddle boat.
This park features a spectacular limestone karst landscape with an underground river. It represents a significant habitat for biodiversity conservation. The site contains a full 'mountain-to-sea' ecosystem and has some of the most important forests in Asia.
PUERTO PRINCESA UNDERGROUND RIVER

[Images of underground river and cave formations]
To conserve the outstanding universal values of the Puerto Princesa Underground River, a carrying capacity of nine hundred visitors a day has been set. A no permit, no entry policy is strictly enforced to ensure the thousands of bats and swiftlet and other life forms are not disturbed beyond their tolerable level that will cause them to abandon the underground River for more suitable conditions.
## Number Of Visitors
### 2005 - 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>26,920</td>
<td>7,222</td>
<td>34,142</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>36,306</td>
<td>9,962</td>
<td>46,268</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>49,185</td>
<td>14,086</td>
<td>63,271</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>76,065</td>
<td>17,363</td>
<td>93,428</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>122,501</td>
<td>21,718</td>
<td>144,219</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>148,760</td>
<td>24,067</td>
<td>172,827</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>197,783</td>
<td>38,097</td>
<td>235,870</td>
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PUERTO PRINCESA UNDERGROUND RIVER

Agencies responsible for its progress:

• Local Government of Puerto Princesa City
• Local Tourism Stakeholders
• The Department of Tourism and Other Government Agencies
Local Government of Puerto Princesa City:

- Commitment to the development of the tourism product
- Logistic assistance
- Formulation of needed legislations
- Assurance of safety and security of tourists
- Management of the tourism product
The DOT Commitments and Other Government Agencies:

- Organizing the direct and indirect beneficiary sectors of the community
- Tourism awareness campaign
- Capability building of direct beneficiary sectors
- Development of needed infrastructure
- Promotion and marketing
- Regular monitoring and periodic evaluation
The Philippines

DONSOL WHALESHARK INTERACTION PROGRAM
DONSOL WHALE SHARK INTERACTION PROGRAM

• Has changed a sleeping Donsol community of 40,000 population
• Has changed Donsol from 5th class town to 3rd class
• Improved the economic capability of more than a thousand families
• Triggered development of other tourism products in adjacent areas
DONSOL WHALE SHARK INTERACTION PROGRAM

www.sharkdiving.philippines.com
DONSOL WHALE SHARK INTERACTION PROGRAM

Agencies responsible for its progress:

- Donsol Local Government
- World Wild Fund (WWF)
- The Department of Tourism and other Government Agencies
Commitment to the development of the tourism product
Logistic assistance
Formulation of needed legislations
Assurance of safety and security of tourists
Management of the tourism product
DONSOL WHALE SHARK INTERACTION PROGRAM

WWF participation

• In-depth research on whale sharks
• Monitoring and gathering of data
• Submitted proposals of programs and activities to the Donsol LGU on environmental protection, preservation and conservation
The DOT Commitments and Other Government Agencies:

- Organizing the direct and indirect beneficiary sectors of the community
- Tourism awareness campaign
- Capability building of direct beneficiary sectors
- Training of fishermen to become butanding interaction officers and firefly interpreters
- Promotion and marketing
- Regular monitoring and periodic evaluation
Challenges of Ecotourism Development

• Change of the LGU leadership every 3 years
• Lack of appropriate interpretation of ecotourism products, particularly in protected areas
• Inadequate marketing and promotion of protected areas
• Balancing development and preservation of the natural assets
“All the stakeholders in tourism development should safeguard the natural environment with a view to achieving sound, continuous and sustainable economic growth geared to satisfying equitably the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.”

- Global Code of Ethics for Tourism
Thank you.