

MMSU's Commitment

Contribute significantly to the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.



Exploration of Mesophotic Coral Reefs in Ilocos Region

MMSU ventured into collaborative research with the University of the Philippines-Marine Science Institute and Holy Name University in exploring the mesophotic coral reef ecosystem in Region 1. The research aims to discover the ecological factors affecting the coral ecosystems, and their potential as refugees from disturbances. Additionally, this research is expected to provide inputs to address the biodiversity and ecological dynamics of mesophotic coral reef ecosystems in the Ilocos region. With the soon availability of data on this ecosystem, it is hoped to contribute to the formulation of effective conservation strategies that safeguard these fragile ecosystems from potential threats including climate change.

Key Activities and Accomplishments

- **Fiberglass boats awarded to fisherfolk orgs.** Demonstrating their commitment to enhancing the fisheries industry in Ilocos Norte, Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) awarded 25-footer fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) boats to six fisherfolk organizations on May 10. This initiative is part of the F/B Pagbabago Livelihood Development Program, a collaboration between BFAR, MMSU, and the Provincial

Government of Ilocos Norte. The program seeks to improve the livelihood of fisherfolk by providing training and eco-friendly, durable FRP boats, which are disaster-resilient and contribute to resource conservation by reducing the need for wood. This initiative not only enhances the safety and productivity of fishermen but also supports food security and sustainability in coastal communities.

- **Industry partnership.** Mariano Marcos State University (MMSU) reaffirmed its support and commitment to the West Philippine Seascape (WPS) project during an inception meeting and stakeholders' consultation held at the MMSU Hostel on February 10. As a national university for fisheries, MMSU's innovative research programs are poised to significantly contribute to the project's implementation. The WPS project, spearheaded by the USAID, Gerry Roxas Foundation (GRF), and IMPL Project Philippines Foundation, aims to establish inclusive resource governance, security, resilience, and sustainability in 13 coastal municipalities, including Pagudpud, Bangui, Burgos, and Pasuquin in Ilocos Norte. Part of the INSPIRE program, the initiative seeks to enhance natural resource resilience through collaboration with civil society, media, academia, and local communities, furthering efforts toward sustainable development.
- **Sustainable Tilapia Aquaculture in Ilocos Norte (SUSTAIN) Project Implementation.** This project aims to have sustainable tilapia production in the province of Ilocos Norte through utilization of technologies and innovations on tilapia production. The project also aims to established demo-farms for fingerling and grow-out production to augment income and production of farmers within the province. Aside from this, on-site trainings, technical consultation/assistance and monitoring will also be conducted to ensure feasibility of the endeavors.
- **Involvement in the Underwater Museum Project.** Officials, faculty members, and researchers of Mariano Marcos State University, led by MMSU President Shirley C. Agrupis, participated in the launch of the Pinto Underwater Sculpture Museum for Marine Ecosystem Regeneration Project on May 1, at Currimao Baywalk, Ilocos Norte. During the event, 20 marine sculptures were submerged into the bay using the Naval Vessel BRP Waray LC288. The project aims to restore Currimao Bay's marine ecosystem by creating artificial reefs through sculptures made of durable, non-toxic materials, addressing coral reef degradation, promoting marine conservation, and boosting local tourism. MMSU, known for its expertise in marine conservation and aquatic resource management, is a key project consultant, providing technical support to ensure alignment with marine protection goals and aiding coastal communities.

Highlights

	2020	2021	2022	2023
<i>Enrolment</i>				
BS Fisheries	109	141	150	149
BS Marine Biology	146	151	143	139
<i>Number of Graduates</i>				
BS Fisheries*	0	0	19	19
BS Marine Biology	24	22	20	14

*There are no graduates for BS Fisheries during the year 2020 and 2021 due to K-12 transition