

# When are fish 'wildlife'?

Conservation ethics and real life impacts of shark protection  
on marginalized communities

Dr. Jo Marie Acebes



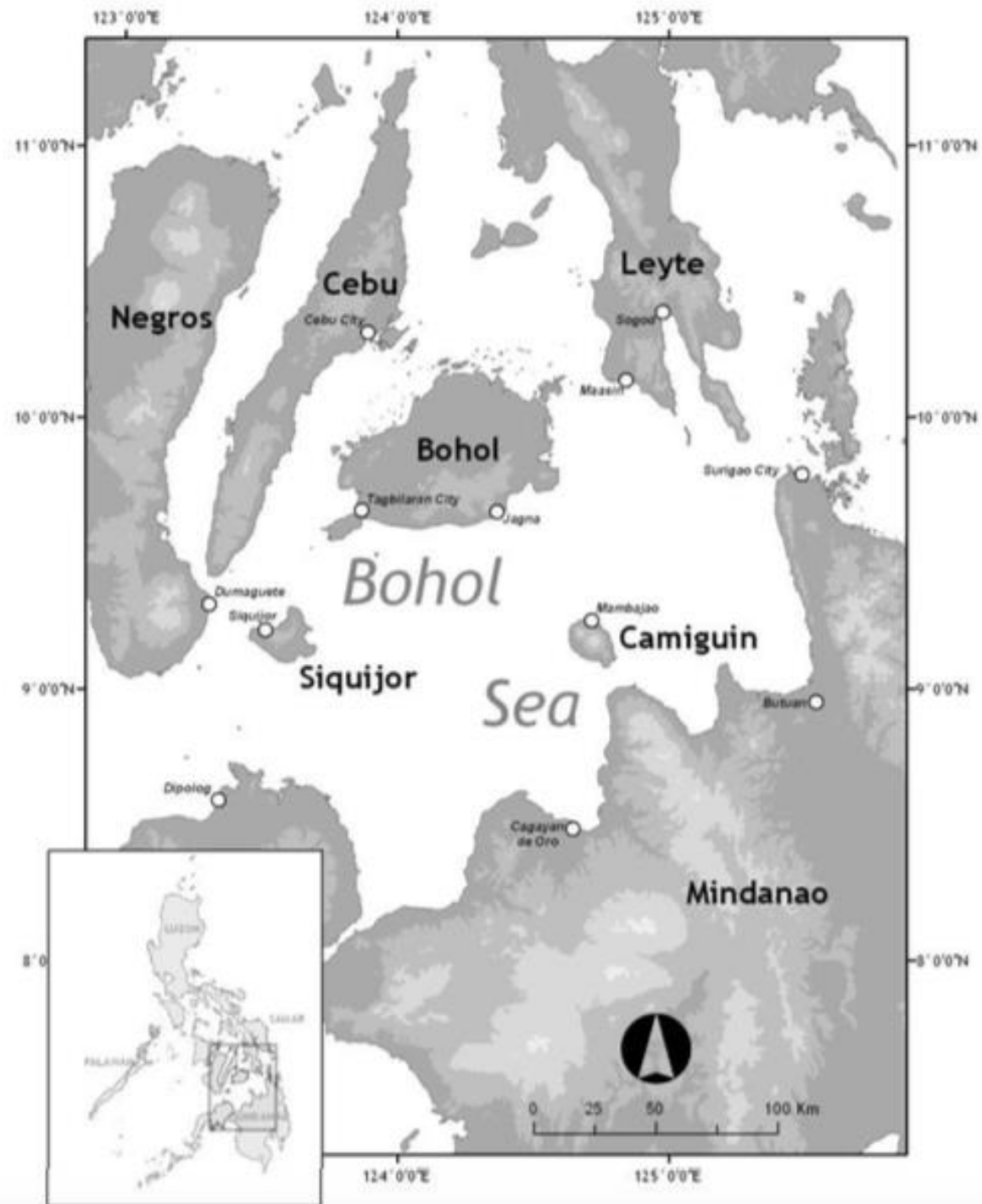
Shannon Arnold



# Jagna, Bohol, Philippines Ray Fishery

- Documented back to 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Early 1900s sail and harpoons
- 1960s mechanized boats
- 1970s nylon drift nets
- Banned in April 2017 with two weeks notice





## Tkarihwaí:ri Code of Ethical Conduct

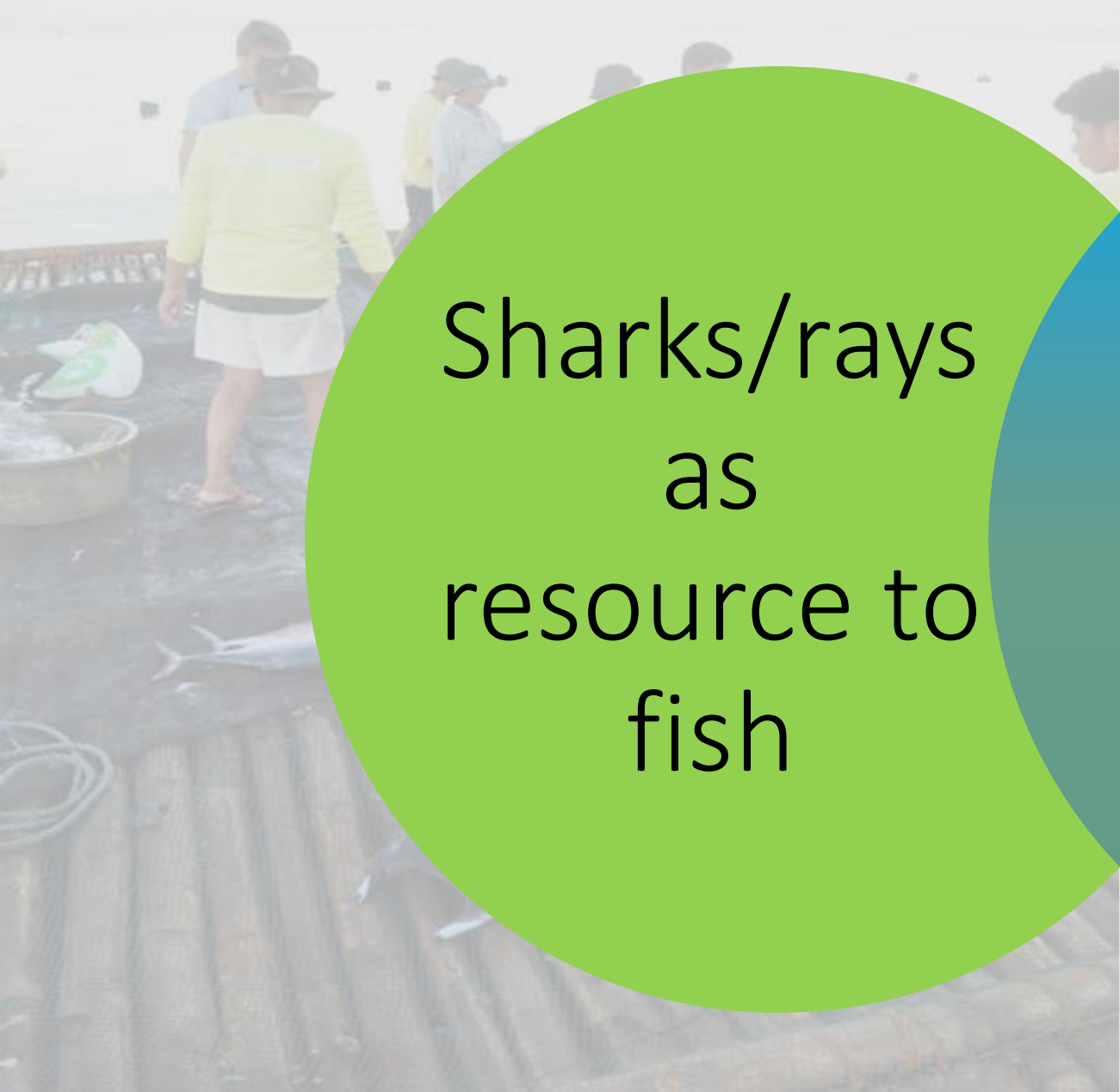
*Adopted 2010 Convention on Biological Diversity COP*

“Activities/interactions related to biological diversity, and the objectives of the Convention, such as conservation, ought not to cause indigenous and local communities to be removed from their lands and waters or lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by them, as applicable, by force or coercion and without their consent.” *section 2(19)*

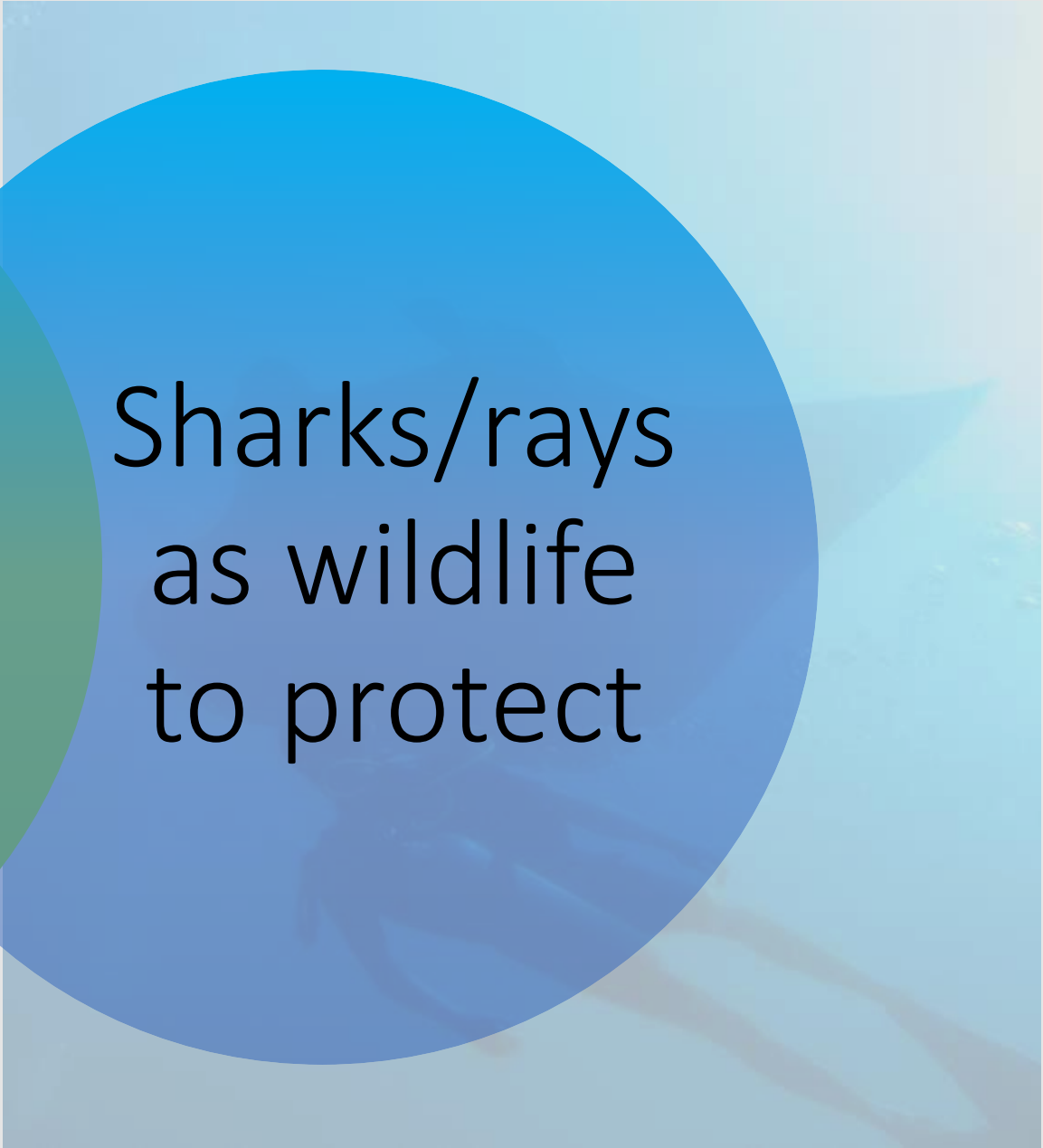
“Rights-based approaches have developed out of a growing acknowledgement that the power conservation organisations have to influence natural resource management comes with corresponding responsibilities to respect and support the rights of people whose lives and livelihoods are strongly linked to those resources.”

*~Cambridge Conservation Initiative INTRINSIC trainers’ guide*



A photograph of a fishing boat deck. In the foreground, a shark is lying on the wooden planks. Several people are visible in the background, some wearing yellow shirts. The scene is outdoors, likely on a boat.

Sharks/rays  
as  
resource to  
fish

A photograph of a shark swimming underwater. The water is clear and blue. The shark is seen from below, swimming towards the right.

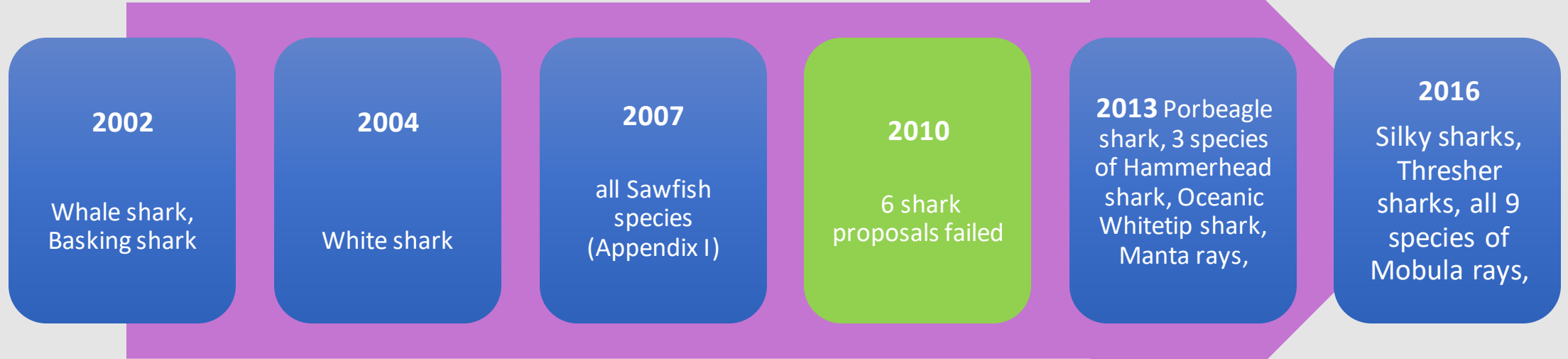
Sharks/rays  
as wildlife  
to protect



RFMOs,  
(community)  
fisheries  
management

CITES, trade  
and fishing  
bans,  
sanctuaries

# CITES shark and ray listings



**Appendix II** - includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

Export permit with Non Detrimental Finding report needed

**No control on domestic catch and use required**



# Sharks and rays as wildlife

'Protect, ban, enforce' mantra translated to domestic policy



National advocates for shark protection with international conservation org support and tourism operators

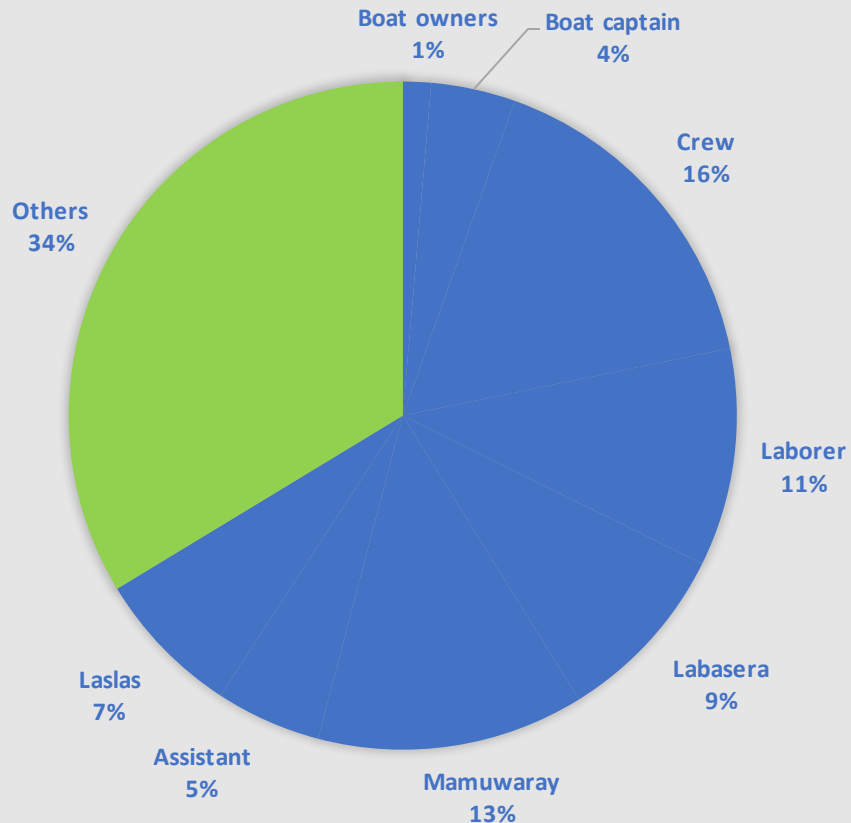
Push for interpretation of amended Fisheries Code to ban all catch, selling, trade of ALL CITES APPENDICES (I, II, III) listed aquatic animals

No consultation, planning with local community and researchers



# Household Economic Impact of Pantihan Fishery

66% OF ADULTS EARN DIRECT INCOME FROM MOBULA FISHERY

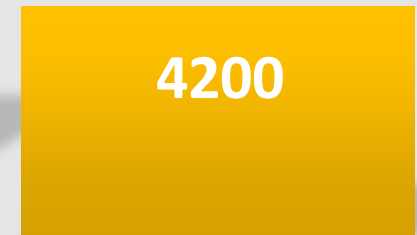


Monthly Household Income Before and After the Mobula Fishing Ban

PhP



Average Monthly Income Pantihan Fishery



Average Monthly Income after Ban

- Dislocation of family members to work outside community or country
- High school and college students dropping out, no tuition
- Increasing debt
- Increasing conflict with neighbouring community and food crop farmers
- Loss of traditional food source
- Narrowing of choices and household options
- Increased stress and depression



# Income replacement

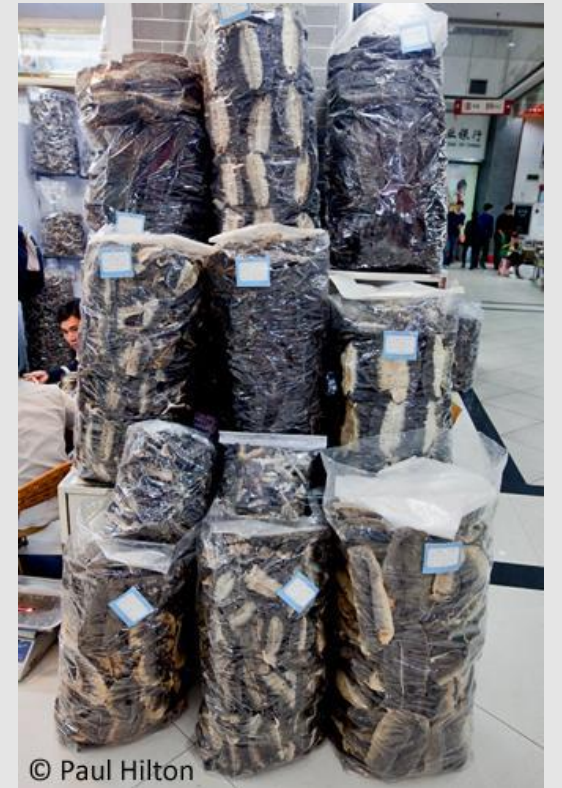
- The fishers are highly specialized in their fields and consider living off the sea more than a profession – it is a way of life – 63% had income ideas/options that were fisheries related and almost all preferred such, if possible
- To date, local government has only implemented a community drying rack for squid (not big enough, no governance for sharing) and given out nets for tuna fishing
- Local government ‘informed’ fishers of other funded plans

Possible IGA	No. of workers	Advantages	Disadvantages	Needs (assets, skills, capital)	Problems & Questions	Other considerations
Fish drying	arbitrary	Sustainable; food for family	Difficult during the rainy season	Drying area; materials <u>capital: 7,000 per set-up</u>	--	--
Mangko / Pamo fishing	5 crew members per boat	Chance to catch high-value fish; sufficient income	Seasonal and unsuitable for monsoon	Boats and gear <u>capital: 500,000 per boat</u>	Buyer dictates the price	Need for clear policies
Fishing supply	2 shop attendants	Fair pricing; credit line can be established; accessible; sure ROI	May need to rent space; requires daily sales remittance	Store area; record keeping and inventory trainings; identify reliable shop keepers <u>capital: 200,000 minimum</u>	Possible unpaid debts; conduct monthly inventory	Need for clear policies
Fish buy & sell	1	Cover needs like food and school fees	Weather dependent, inconsistent catch	Materials <u>capital: 5,000 minimum</u>	If there are no regular buyer or “suki”	Unsold fish can be dried
Poultry*	3	Employment; produce a fair amount of chicken and eggs	Location of poultry house; may cause spread of diseases to nearby residents; prone to bird flu; high cost of feeds	Area and building; supply of feeds <u>capital: 200,000</u>	Training for inventory	Should be located away from residential area; need to ensure health of people and environment; need for clear policies
Squid fishing	Not specified	Possibly get 20-30 kg in a trip		Boat and gears; <u>capital: 30,000 per set</u>	--	--

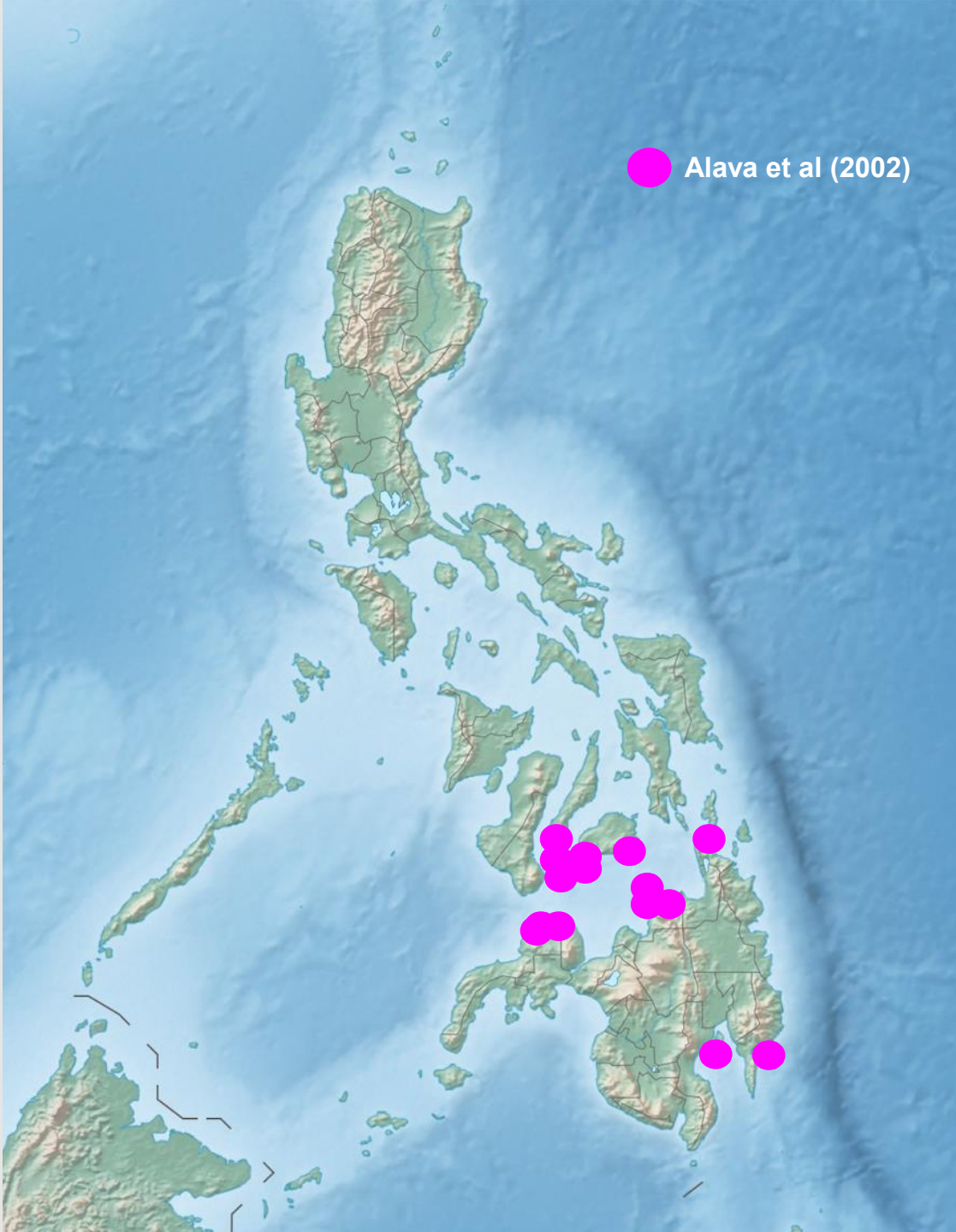
# Effectiveness of ban on species mortality?

## Assumptions:

- International trade of parts driving fisheries (CITES mandate)
- Shutting down the directed fishery will result in significant reduction in mortality domestically

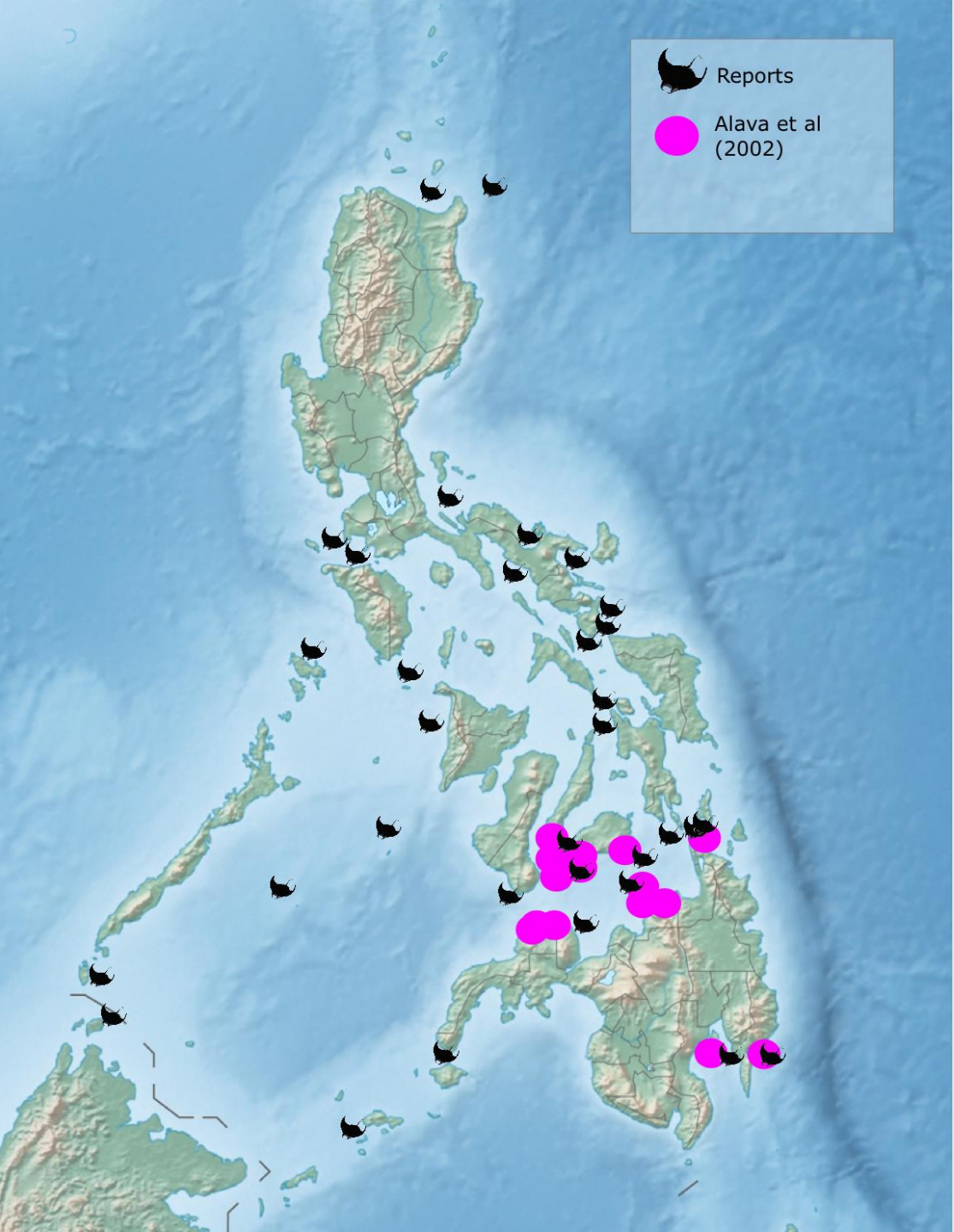


# Confirmed mobula landings and sightings 2002 - 2012



# Confirmed mobula landings and sightings present

*(Arnold, Manta Trust forthcoming)*





# Community Mobulid Fishery Rapid Assessments



Tawi Tawi



Antique



Iligan



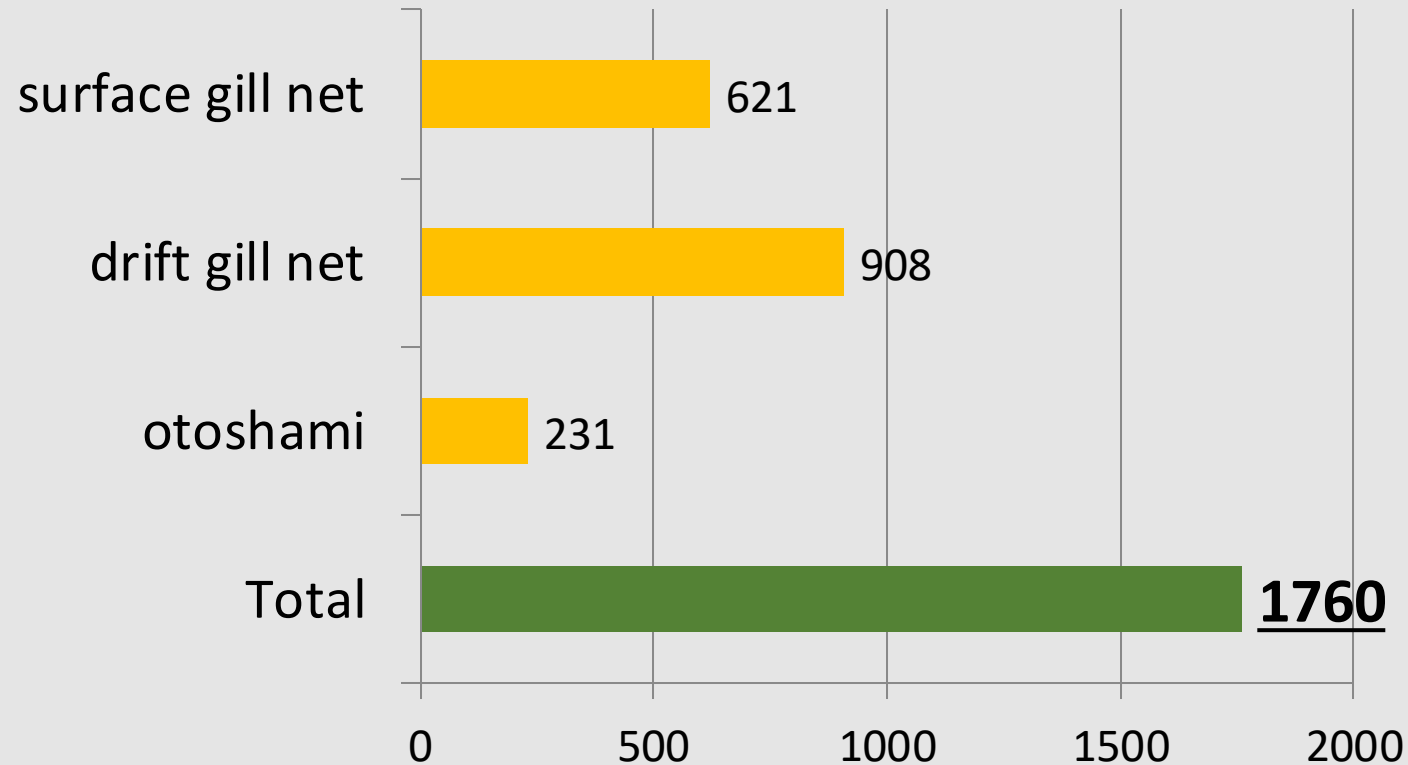
Davao Oriental



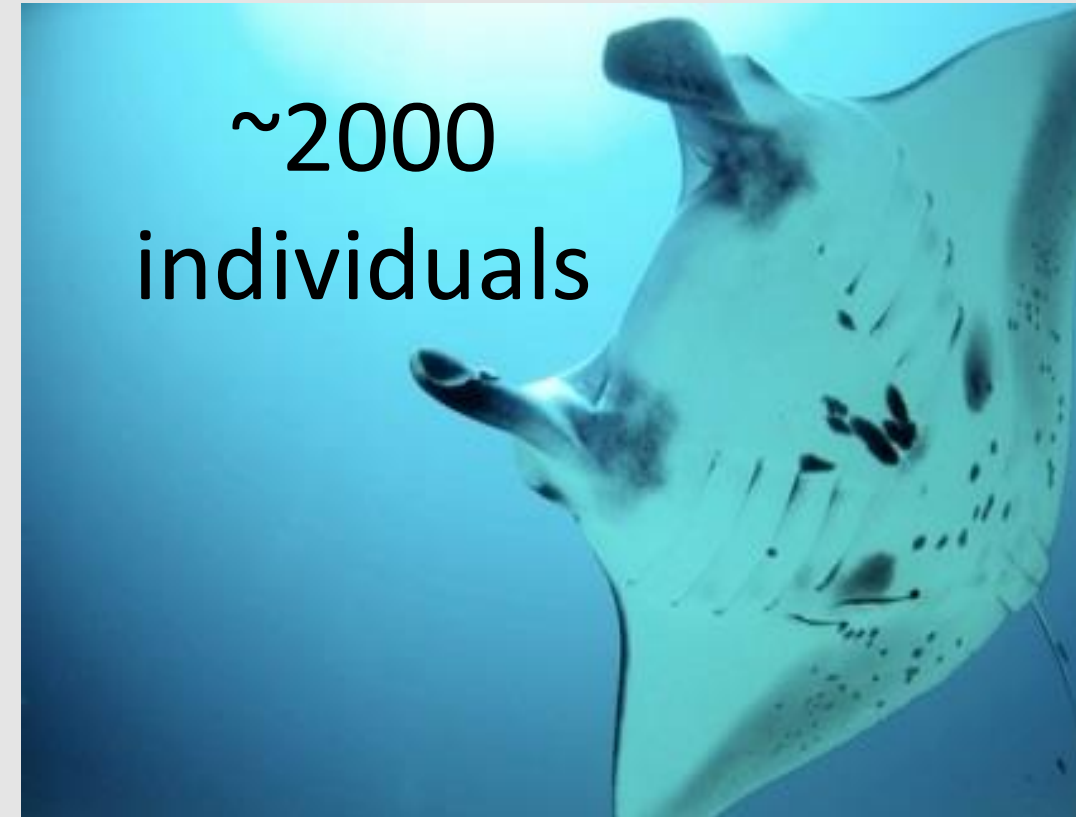
Camarines Sur

# Mainly bycatch with infrequent opportunistic targeting

Annual Individual Mobula Bycatch Antique  
Province



Jagna directed fishery



NO evidence that gills for the international market are the driver of the fisheries in the Philippines

- Is the 'protect, ban, enforce' frame of wildlife protection the appropriate approach for fished animals like sharks and rays?
- Where are local community voices in the decision making at high level conservation and fisheries management forum like CITES, RFMOs?
- What are the responsibilities of conservation organizations and funders to follow rights based approaches and ensure support to address the impacts of their advocacy efforts on local communities?
- If protection from directed fisheries is required for the recovery of a species there needs to be long term investment and commitment to supporting social, cultural, and economic community-led planning – boots on the ground work - not just investment in the high level regulatory win

# Thank you

- People of Jagna, Bohol
- Maita Verdote, Project Manager



With support from:

