

## **Coral Lifeform Structure in Selected Marine Protected Areas in Southern Cebu, Philippines**

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**Abstract :** The selected marine protected areas (MPAs) of southern Cebu, Philippines were assessed after these have been established between the years 2000 to 2007. These include Casay of Argao, Cawayan of Dalaguete, Guiwang-Daang Lungsod of Alcoy, North Granada of Boljoon and Sta. Cruz of Ronda. These MPAs were assessed to gather baseline information on its coral life-form structure. Point-intercept transect (PIT) method was used in the observation. Benthic life form and reef substrate at each 0.25 m point interval were identified and recorded along 50 meters transect line both inside and outside of these MPAs. It has been observed that massive, branching and digitate form of corals dominated among the five sanctuaries. Percentage of Live Hard Corals was much higher inside than outside in all sanctuaries. Common to all sanctuaries were noticeable presence of dead corals with algae and coral rubbles indicating an over-exploited habitat. Casay, Cawayan and Daan-Lungsod MPAs had some Crown of Thorn Starfish (COTS) which may pose threat to its coral community. It has been recommended that there should be strict law enforcement and a long term monitoring to continuously conserve and protect coral reef which is an important habitat for fishes for its sustainability as food for human.

**Keywords :** coral rubbles, coral reef, live hard coral, point-intercept transect

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