Philippines
Project Guide
2020
This document is intended to provide guidance to the volunteers who have booked onto Coral Cay Conservation’s Philippines project; The Southern Leyte Coral Reef Conservation Project. This document was updated in 2020.

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If you have queries regarding the contents of this document, or the expedition package you have booked onto, you are advised to contact Coral Cay Conservation prior to your departure.

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This guide has been written to help you prepare for your stay with Coral Cay Conservation, and we make every effort to ensure that it is updated regularly so that it contains everything you need to know.

What’s important to you may seem trivial to others but my job is to ensure that you set out on your new journey with confidence and excitement, so if you have any questions that are not covered in this guide, or need something clarified, please get in touch and I’ll be happy to help.

Without the support of the local communities our impact would be limited. It’s for this reason that we keep the local people at the heart of our actions. We focus on community-based conservation programmes that contribute to the protection of reefs and associated ecosystems throughout Southern Leyte, raising awareness and inspiring a new generation of conservation advocates. During your expedition you will directly contribute to the global drive of protecting marine coastal resources and coral reefs for the benefit of future generations in developing countries.

These experiences have the power to change your entire outlook on the world and your place in it, I hope that your time on site will help you to build a greater affinity for the marine world and give you a chance to find friendships that will last well beyond your stay with us.

Tessa Dawson
Volunteer Coordinator
Welcome to the Philippines
We are excited for you to join us at Coral Cay Conservation’s (CCC) Philippines site, to help us conserve and protect fragile reef environments. It’s a great pleasure for us to have you on board and contributing to this critical project. It’s solely because of volunteers like yourself that we are able to do the work that we do, so welcome to the Philippines and the Southern Leyte Coral Reef Conservation Project (LRCP).

The Philippines is found in the Coral Triangle. This is an area lauded as the ‘Amazon of the sea’ due to its high level of biodiversity, unmatched by any other marine region on the planet. It is home to over 70% of all known coral species, over 50% of Indo-Pacific reef fishes and six of the seven marine turtle species. The Philippines has it all, from the larger species in the form of whale sharks and turtles, to an incredible array of macrofauna.

**The LRCP**

The Southern Leyte Coral Reef Conservation Project (LRCP) was founded in 2002 to secure the long-term benefits and services of coral reefs and associated systems; protecting food security and supporting livelihoods of the residents in the province. CCC are currently located in the Barangay (village) of Napantao, in San Francisco Municipality, Southern Leyte.

CCC’s work in the Philippines can be divided into three tiers: scientific data collection, community outreach and education, and capacity building. This holistic approach has enabled us to better understand the communities needs and build relationships. This has allowed us to establish a greater comprehension of the importance of coral reefs and the services to local communities as well as working towards successful marine resource management in participation with stakeholders and project partners.

Since the project’s inception, CCC have undertaken three phases:

**Phase I**

2002-2012

During this phase, a total of 2,065 individual baseline surveys were conducted aiming to map and understand the rich marine biodiversity in Southern Leyte. The Phase I teams identified over 250 species of Scleractinia hard coral in the bay, with assistance from renowned Coral Biologist and Taxonomist, Douglas Fenner, whilst highlighting the high numbers of reef fish species, complex reef structures and highly diverse invertebrate communities. By identifying key areas of conservation value, including our House Reef, Napantao, alongside the presence of Whale Sharks, turtles and cetaceans in the bay, CCC were able to construct a strong, ecological foundation for the development of environmental management plans.

**Phase II**

2012 – 2017

After the successful mapping of high levels of marine biodiversity and the highlighting of spatial impacts to resources, CCC transferred into Phase II; collecting biophysical data to support the establishment of small-scale Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). By undertaking surveys within the coastal waters of local communities, CCC were able to provide high-resolution ecological data directly to local stakeholders to facilitate local conservation efforts. Over the course of 5 years; CCC have provided recommendations for over 20 MPAs, with 10 being officially declared by 2017.

During this phase, great effort was placed into community education and outreach, working directly with local schools, resource managers and village officials to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable practices. A key element of these efforts was the successful introduction of our volunteer-funded Scholarship Programme; offering free 4-week placements to local Filipinos.
Phase III
2018 - 2020

In 2018 we moved to a Before-After-Control-Impact (BACI) framework, allowing us to evaluate the efficacy of previous established MPAs; a vital step in protecting and conserving Southern Leyte’s reefs.

Phase IV
2020 – Now

After a brief break from establishing MPAs in Southern Leyte, during Phase IV of the project, we will aim to increase the area of coral reefs protected by MPAs. However, as protocols advance, so must the project, and therefore, to couple our core approach, we will be developing and trialling new and exciting higher resolution data collection techniques.

You can read more about the project and surveyning protocol in the Science Workbook available in the Secure Volunteer Area.

Customs and Culture

CCC works in the Philippines by invitation of the Provincial Government of Southern Leyte and the local communities within the project area. The Filipino people are extremely friendly, hospitable and considerate. Respect is a big part of their culture so just dress conservatively when in public, smile and behave graciously and you will find them very willing to help you.

The official languages of the country are Tagalog and English. However, due to the Philippines being comprised of 7,641 islands there are approximately 170 regional dialects that are used throughout the country, with Visayan being our local dialect in Southern Leyte (the Visayas). Over 90% of Filipinos follow Christianity with the majority being Roman Catholic, and a smaller number follow Islam (mostly based in the Southern islands). If you would like to learn more about the culture and history of this fascinating nation, Lonely Planet and Rough Guide offer excellent travel guides.

Our Mission

Providing resources to help sustain livelihoods and alleviate poverty through the protection of coral reefs and associated ecosystems
Travel insurance

It is mandatory for all volunteers to provide their own travel, medical and dive insurance (this can be a combined package). It’s a good idea to get your travel insurance booked before you spend any money on your stay. Your insurance must cover all medical costs associated with scuba diving, including:

- Decompression chambers and unlimited diving to a depth of 30 metres
- Dive training (where applicable)
- Helicopter Rescue
- Light manual labour
- Medical emergency repatriation

Dive specific packages from providers such as DAN or Divemaster are well regarded within the diving community. Some packages require that you purchase a separate policy to cover non-diving travel insurance. Ensure that you read the policy terms carefully and if in doubt call your provider to get clarification. Many insurance companies will not pay bills upfront, if this is the case you should ensure that you have a credit card with you for emergency purposes.

You should also consider taking insurance which covers cancellation or curtailment of your trip, in case you need to cancel or leave early for personal reasons.

If you are staying less than 30 days

Many nationalities (Inc. British and Irish passport holders) may enter and stay in the Philippines for 30 days without having to apply for a visa in advance. This is provided you hold valid tickets for your return journey out of the Philippines, and that your passport is valid for at least 6 months post your return date (the latter is not necessary for British/Irish passport holders). When completing your entry ticket please put your reason for travel as ‘Tourism’.

If you are staying longer than 30 days

and get the 59-day Tourist Visa in advance

(RECOMMENDED)

The best option is to apply for a 59-day Tourist Visa (using a Non-Immigration Visa Application Form) in person at the Philippine Embassy before you travel, or by post. Please note the postal option will require that you have your application stamped by a notary public (UK residents can search here for their closest registered notary).

Necessary information for filling in the form:

- **Purpose of entry:** please state ‘tourism’
- **Name & Address of Reference in the Philippines:** Sir Nedgar V. Garves, Provincial Tourism Officer, Provincial Government of Southern Leyte
- **Means of financial support:** ‘Savings’ (if you have a low bank balance contact HO and we will provide you with a letter confirming that your accommodation and board are paid for).

Visa

Entry requirements are subject to change with little to no notice, so you should check the Philippine Embassy’s website for your home country’s visa rules and requirements. You will need a flight ticket showing that you are leaving the Philippines in order to be allowed into the country.

All countries have strict immigration rules with differing requirements, so make sure you check for changes before you travel!

Tessa, Volunteer Coordinator
If you are staying longer than 30 days and get the free 30-day Visa on arrival

If you intend on getting the free 30-day visa on arrival, before your passport is stamped you can ask for a ‘Visa Waiver’ and pay a fee, this is basically a stamp in your passport which allows you to stay for another 29 days in-country (59 days in total). This is sometimes available in main airports only (Manila/Cebu) but recent feedback has suggested that these are rarely given, so feel free to ask but you may not be successful.

Visa Extensions

You will need to purchase visa extensions in-country if you are staying longer than your initial visa allowance. You can apply for an extension up to 2 weeks before the final expiry date, and extensions will be dated from the expiry date of your last visa. The cost for visa extensions is high so do consult the table below. The day count starts from the day after you arrive in the Philippines and once you have been in-country 59 days you will have to buy an Alien Certificate of Registration Identity Card (ACR-I). If you come in on the free 30-day visa your first extension can only be for 30 days. Once you have been in-country for 59 days you can extend in durations of 30 days, 59 days, or 6 months.

Visa extensions can be easily organised in one day in Tacloban and the staff on site will be happy to explain this further to you.

If you are staying in the Philippines for longer than six-months, you will need to complete a (single-use) Exit Visa application. This application must be completed at least 72 hours prior to departure and costs approximately 500 PHP.

Medical and travel health

All staff members on CCC expeditions are trained as first aiders, and casualty evacuation procedures have been devised specifically for the Philippines site in the event of a serious injury or medical problem. You are personally liable for any expenditure incurred in relation to medical treatment that we cannot offer at the expedition base (e.g. referrals to a doctor or specialist, medical evacuation, hospitalisation etc.). It is therefore essential that you obtain suitable medical insurance prior to arrival at the expedition base.

All CCC personnel must complete the CCC and PADI medical forms found in the secure volunteers’ area on the website and be subsequently medically cleared to join our project.

Use this table to work out what Visa you need and how much money to put aside for budgeting! We understand Visas can be confusing so if you’re unsure, give us a call. Please note that costs may change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visa type</th>
<th>PhP</th>
<th>GBP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59-day tourist visa</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>£28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-day visa on arrival</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-day ‘Visa Waiver’</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>£45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACR-I Card</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>£58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-day extension</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>£48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-day extension</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>£65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-month extension</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>£131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helpful Hints

Vaccinations
The Philippines is a tropical country and as such is subject to tropical diseases. You should speak to your GP and consult the Fit For Travel website for the most up to date information on any necessary vaccinations.

Dental health
Dental issues may prevent you from diving so visit a dentist before you arrive on site.

Medication
Supply and brands may differ in-country, you should consider bringing twice the amount in case of unforeseen delays during travel.

Mosquitos
Bring a good supply of your preferred repellent to protect yourself from irritating bites and potential health impacts (a max of 50% DEET is recommended). Loose fitting, long sleeved tops and trousers are recommended for the evenings and mosquito nets are provided to help avoid bites.

Sun screen
Bring plenty of high factor sun screen and lip salve, plus a hat and light weight clothing. Please think of the reef and consider bringing a reef safe sun screen.

Dehydration
Water requirements increase enormously in the tropics, bring along a reusable bottle, drink lots and consider bringing a supply of rehydration salts (such as Dioralyte) with you. There is plenty of drinking water available on site.

Personal hygiene
With hot/humid weather comes increased risk of the spread of bacterial infections. Thoroughly wash your hands after using the toilet and be cautious with what you eat and drink whilst travelling. Rinse your ears out with clean fresh water after every dive to prevent ear infections and dry off thoroughly after getting wet to prevent chaffing.

Behaviour
Medical facilities are limited in-country. We have guidelines in place on site to keep you safe, in return we trust you to behave sensibly to ensure that you do not put yourself in harm’s way.

Medical Facilities
Basic medical care is available on-site, but if further care is needed, the nearest medical facilities are as follows:

- Liloan Community Hospital
- Sogod District Hospital A&E
- Cebu Recompression Chamber
Sunscreens contain organic (chemical) and/or inorganic (mineral) UV filters that protect us from harmful UV light – a must for working in the tropics! In recent years, there have been a number of studies undertaken that have shown sunscreens and other cosmetic products can contain certain chemical and mineral substances that are adding to the burdens by coral reefs, such as global climate change.

Some sunscreens contain chemical ingredients such as: benzophenone-3 and -4 (BP-3 or Oxybenzone; BP-4); ethylhexyl methoxy cinnamate (EHMC); homoslate (HMS); 4-methylbenzylidene camphor (4-MBC); diethylamino hydroxybenzoyl hexyl benzoate (DHHB). As well as mineral ingredients such as titanium dioxide. These chemical and mineral ingredients have been detected by a small number of studies in coastal environments, in varying concentrations, and have been found to be detrimental to the marine organisms, including corals – not good when we work to conserve coral reefs!

The chemical UV filter oxybenzone has been studied intensively and has been found to cause the following:

- Bleaching of coral fragments and cells in a range of hard coral (Scleractinian) species.
- Damage and deformation of coral larvae.
- Damage to coral DNA and their reproductive success.

Choosing a Reef Safe Sunscreen!

First things first, the word ‘Natural’ is in no way synonymous with safe (either for you or the reef), and "chemical-free" is impossible, as whether naturally derived or synthetically made all ingredients are made up of chemicals. Similarly, ‘mineral’ only means the ingredients are naturally occurring, not that it is necessarily reef safe or effective. Now that we’ve got that bugbear out the way let’s move on.

The Haereticus Environmental Laboratory website is a great first step. The list is updated every 2 years to ensure that changes have not made the chemicals unsafe. Non-nano Zinc Oxide seems to be the most accepted and superior active ingredient for alternative sunscreens, please make sure that this is non-nano to ensure that it cannot be ingested by our ocean dwelling friends.

You’ve googled reef safe sunscreens, checked your ingredients list and found one that is safe, suited to your skin, and proven to be effective. Now it’s time to accept that reef safe sunscreen will not be as invisible as your usual product, as Zinc Oxide has a whitening effect! We think that this is a small price to pay to save the reefs but if it bothers you there are tinted versions available. Please be aware that Zinc Oxide products marketed as ‘clear’ are more likely to use nano particles so double check this.

We hope that this has been helpful. Remember the best (and most natural) choice that you can make for your skin and health is covering up! Consider bringing along a rash vest and leggings, or a stinger suit.

Tip
You may be able to find your product listed on Environmental Working Group’s website. A helpful extra check to ensure your product is effective.
Equipment

Below you will find a kit list of items which you will need to bring with you. We are happy to provide you with the use of a BCD, Regulator, tanks and weights during your stay (at no extra charge). This equipment is offered on a shared basis so if you have your own BCD and Reg we would recommend bringing them.

For all other items please note that we are in a very remote area and it is not possible to buy or rent dive gear in Southern Leyte, as such we have indicated what is essential and recommended. You may miss out on activities if you do not bring essential items with you. HO are always happy to advise on brands and retailers.

PADI Manuals and PICs

PADI requires that all students have their own set of manuals and a Positive Identification Card (PIC) to certify each course. We have included these in the course fee where possible*. Please ensure you register your Digital pack before arriving on site.

Open Water course: PADI Open Water Digital Certification Pack Lite.

PADI Advanced Open Water course: PADI Advanced Open Water Digital Certification Pack Lite.


PADI Divemaster course: PADI Divemaster Crew Pack and annual registration *not included in the course fee.

CCC Diver PADI Specialty course: No manual needed.

Helpful hints

Due to the poor postal service to the Philippines, we may ask you to carry additional items in your luggage for site use (PADI manuals, medical equipment etc.). We will confirm the size and weight of these items so that you can make an informed decision as to whether you can help. These items will be posted to you so that they can be inspected before packing.

Bedding

We will provide you with a mattress, pillow, 2 sets of bed linen and a mosquito net during your stay.

Toiletries

Basic products such as hair and body wash are available in Southern Leyte but often in single use sachets and/or including skin whitening ingredients. Consider bringing enough to last your whole stay - shampoo/conditioner bars and soap are plastic free, light and last months! Items such as contact lens solution, sanitary wear, razor blades, sun screen etc. can be difficult/expensive to obtain so you should also bring these with you. Wherever possible, please ensure that these items are biodegradable and environmentally friendly, avoiding single-use plastics where possible.

Clothing

You do not need huge amounts of clothing. A few pairs of shorts, underwear, swimwear, t-shirts, hat, sun glasses, a warm top, a cheap lightweight waterproof, plus a sturdy pair of shoes and sandals is all you’ll need. Light, long-sleeved shirt and trousers to keep the mosquitoes off in the evening are also a good idea. Please be advised that Gore-Tex is not suitable for tropical climates.

There are basic facilities for hand washing clothes on-site, or one of our local villagers will wash items for a small fee. You should bring a small amount of environmentally friendly washing powder or purchase some whilst in-country.
We’ve included this table to assist you in your preparations before joining us in the Philippines. The items are divided into those that are **essential** and those that we recommend you bring. If you have any queries, get in touch.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marine Kit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant PADI Lite Packs or Divemaster Crew Pack</td>
<td>✓*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mask and Snorkel</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fins (open foot)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetsuit booties</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive compass</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive log book</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive cutting tool (knife/shears/line cutter)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive computer (recommended) or Digital Depth Gauge</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dive slate (1 x A4)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x pens and pencils</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 mm Wetsuit, or a rash vest and boardies</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCD and/or Regulator</td>
<td>✓ b</td>
<td>✓ c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underwater torch and safety beacon</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Kit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passport</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; medical insurance policy details</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippine pesos</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airline tickets</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit card</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC emergency contact number</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insect repellent</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun cream</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light weight waterproof jacket</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head torch</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towel</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reusable Water bottle</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toiletries</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel adaptor (2 flat parallel pins)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small amount of clothes wash</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sturdy pair of shoes/trainers</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandals/flip flops</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimwear</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid currency card</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare batteries (rechargeable)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hat</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunglasses</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleeping bag liner (could use a duvet cover)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medical Kit</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehydration salts</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plasters/Dressings (range of sizes)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antiseptic wipes/ointment/powder spray</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antihistamine cream</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-drowsy antihistamine tablets (if recommended by a doctor)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ibuprofen/Paracetamol</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antibiotic ear drops (if recommended by a doctor)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* PADI Lite packs are included in the course fee for all courses up to Divemaster. Anyone undertaking their Divemaster course must purchase a Divemaster Crew Pack, do get in touch for current prices. Please note if you are already certified you only need bring your PIC/proof of certification with you.

* A4 slates are necessary due to the requirements of data collection protocols. If you cannot obtain an A4 slate, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

* If you choose to bring your own (rather than borrow) a BCD and/or regulator please ensure that your BCD is fitted with a whistle, your regulator is fitted with an octopus and contents gauge, and that your equipment has been recently serviced and is in good working order.

* Anyone joining for at least four weeks should get the opportunity to go on a night dive. If you wish to join this dive, you’ll need to bring an underwater torch plus a safety beacon/light stick or cyalume light sticks (2 per night dive). We recommend the use of battery powered (non-strobe) safety beacon/light sticks as they are more environmentally friendly.
Wetsuit, or a rash vest and boardies

During some periods of the year you may find the water warm enough to dive without a wetsuit and only use a rash vest and board shorts. We will always advocate the use of wetsuits for better protection against cuts, abrasions and small stingers in the water, it is however appreciated that you may prefer a rash vest and shorts and choose to bring these items instead. If you do decide to bring a wetsuit, a 3mm long wetsuit is the most popular choice. We have included a temperature chart below to help you decide what diving wear to bring.

Brilliant staff, great location, amazing dives, great learning. Unforgettable experience!

Naomi
CCC Volunteer, 2019
Travel

Due to flight times, most volunteers that join us initially fly to Manila (Ninoy Aquino) International Airport (MNL), stay one night and then fly on to Tacloban (Daniel Z. Romualdez) Airport (TAC) the next morning in time for the rendez-vous at 13:30 on the start date of your expedition. Alternatively, you can overnight in Tacloban and make your way back to the airport in time for the rendez-vous.

At present, only Philippine Airlines runs direct flights from London Heathrow to Manila, but there are many other airlines providing flights via Asia and the Middle East.

Arriving in Manila

On your arrival at MNL pick up your bags and clear Immigration and Customs. Upon entering the Arrivals Hall at MNL, we recommend that you look for the Nissan Taxi Service booth (located directly outside the main exit doors from the Arrivals Hall, just across the road) and book a taxi to your accommodation. This will be more expensive than on a metered taxi but is on a set rate and so less worry for those that are concerned about being overcharged. If you’ve arranged pick-up through your accommodation, you may need to head down the ramp, in between the taxi kiosks, to the public pick up area. The pick-up area has a small ‘car park’ and shops. Please make sure you coordinate with your accommodation regarding arrival time and pick up location.

We would recommend booking your overnight accommodation in Malate – a relatively safe area. There are many hotels and hostels along Adriatico Street in Malate and so finding a suitable place should not be an issue. Alternatively, there are reasonably priced hotels and hostels near the airport if you do not want to visit central Manila.

Manila - Tacloban

The next morning if staying in Malate allow at least one hour to get to MNL as Manila is notoriously congested. Taxis are readily available from outside many hostel reception desks at reasonable prices. You should either agree a price before getting into a taxi or insist that the driver turns on the meter (keep an eye on the meter in case it suddenly increases in price). There are numerous flights leaving in the morning from Manila’s domestic terminal, which will get you to TAC in time for the rendez-vous at 13:30. TAC is tiny so any flight arriving until about 13:15 is fine.

On arrival at TAC collect your luggage and exit the building. You will be met outside the terminal by a CCC representative who will be wearing a CCC T-shirt and they will then accompany you back to site in a taxi. This journey takes approx. 4 hours. This journey time is important to bear in mind when booking your return TAC to MNL flight, as only afternoon/evening flights will be feasible.

It is up to you whether you choose to take the CCC organised taxi to site. If you would prefer to make your own way there are local buses that will take you to our nearest village, from which you can catch a bike to site. Please note the journey time is longer, and it is less comfortable. Contact HO for more information.

Personal Expenditure

The expedition fee includes your dive training and certification, science training, accommodation and meals. The other costs you will need to think about will be your initial travel to/from site, insurance, visa, doctors’ fees for the medical form, and your personal equipment.

Once you get to site there are no essential costs, just spending money for cold beverages and any additional activities you want to do on Sundays.
We have estimated that a budget of approx. £130 to cover in-transit expenses between London and the expedition base (both ways) is adequate, and a budget of approx. £70 per month for personal expenditure during the expedition is more than enough for most people. A rough guide to help you plan your personal budget whilst in-transit to/from the expedition and during expedition is given below.

You can either exchange your money to Philippine pesos in advance of travel or at the counters at Manila airport where exchange rates are usually fairly competitive. Be aware the more small denomination notes that you can get the better, and Manila airport may have less variety of note denominations. There are limited opportunities to exchange money during the expedition. You could also consider using a pre-paid travel card.

Opportunities to get money out will be limited so either bring sufficient money for your entire stay or enough to see you through at least until your first visa extension (i.e. at least 30 days or 59 days dependant on what visa you have). Cash withdrawals from credit cards can often prove very problematic in the Philippines so do not depend on this. Traveller’s cheques are not recommended.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>PhP</th>
<th>GBP</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taxi: Manila International Airport- Accommodation (in Adriatico Street)</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>£9</td>
<td>Metered taxi would be approx. 300 PhP although this would be dependent on traffic and location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Manila</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>£7</td>
<td>In a shared dorm room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>£7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi: Accommodation-Manila Domestic Airport</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>£9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>£32</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal expenses per month</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>£73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial visa extension (59 days) &amp; ID card fee</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>£123</td>
<td>Only for stays of over 7 weeks. See visa section above for further extension costs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>£196</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi: Expedition base - Tacloban Airport</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>£65</td>
<td>Shared between all volunteers leaving on the same date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi: Manila Domestic Airport- Accommodation</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>£9</td>
<td>Or approx. 300 PhP by metered taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation Manila</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>£7</td>
<td>In a shared dorm room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>£7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi: Accommodation-Manila International Airport</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>£9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal Fee: Manila International Airport</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>As of 2019 this is now included in your flight ticket for Manila and Cebu but is subject to change. In the past this has been in the region of £8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>£105</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>22,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>£333</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The taxi service organised by CCC is optional. If you would prefer to use public transport, please contact HO for further information.*
We understand that getting ready for your trip can be a daunting experience, especially when it comes down to what you’re going to pack. To give you a little bit more help, we’ve questioned our Head of Operations, Tristan Brown, about his top 5 must-packs when venturing off into the jungle or under the waves.

1. Repair Kit

“I always make sure that I have a multi-tool, duct tape, para cord and cable ties with me when I’m travelling. From fixing a ripped tent or fashioning a clothes line, to securing a back pack or simply cutting up food, they’ve proven to be a god send time and time again.”

2. Travel Pillow

“These are of course great to use on the plane, but I also use it for an extra level of comfort on site as the one thing site does not have are cushioned chairs.”

3. Prepaid Currency Card

“With a currency card I can move money from my allocated account and switch it into the local currency in advance thereby avoiding extra charges. With Wi-Fi, I can track my spending, switch between currencies and load more money when needed.”

4. Dry Bag

“The Philippines is in the tropics after all and it can get pretty wet. I use a drybag for my electricals to protect them from the weather – they’re also great when hopping on and off boats whilst carrying not-so-waterproof items!”

5. Power bank

“With travel you’re going to want to listen to music, watch movies or browse social media so having a power bank adds an extra level of insurance that I won’t get caught short with a flat battery.”

© Roisin Maddison
Our expedition site is based on Panaon Island on the south eastern tip of Southern Leyte in the rural village (Barangay) of Napantao:

Coral Cay Conservation Napantao Dive Resort
San Francisco 6613
Southern Leyte
Philippines

Set amongst the jungle covered coastline, just metres from the ocean, this site offers the perfect location for our work. Our house reef, where the majority of your training will take place, is one of the main drawcards for scuba divers in the region and has a breath-taking array of wildlife with exceptional coral cover. It is the perfect spot to start your conservation training.

Home is a single level building comprised of 9 shared, single sex dormitories with fans and en-suite wet rooms (with a bucket-flushing toilet), a large communal area, a kitchen, medical room and a science room. We are remote so please be aware that although there is “24hr” electricity (240v) we are subject to occasional brownouts. There is a good supply of fresh water for bathing, either by bucket shower or using the communal screened shower outside, and potable drinking water is shipped in. You will be provided with a single bunk, mattress, pillow, mosquito net and 2 sets of bed linen.

Staff team

During your stay you will be taught and guided by our on-site international and local staff team. More information about the current Philippines staff team can be found here. Our team is diverse and hold a wealth of experience in their fields:

Field Base Manager (FBM)

Holds the overall responsibility for the safety and on-site management of the expedition. They are there to ensure that you are safe, happy and comfortable during your stay.

Project Scientist (PS)

Has responsibility for the planning and co-ordination of the science programme; driving the LRCP in-country, meeting with project partners and developing project outputs. The PS deputises for the FBM should the need arise. You will often see them on the computer analysing data or writing reports, they are a font of knowledge on the ‘bigger picture’ of our work in-country.

Science Officer (SO)

Is responsible for training you in the skills of marine ecological data collection so that you can join our survey teams, whilst overseeing the data collection elements of the programme, this includes staff and volunteer science and survey training. They are marine biology enthusiasts and can’t wait to share their passion with you. They excel in thinking up silly but helpful ways of remembering species’ names!

SCUBA Instructor (SI)

Will provide you with your SCUBA diving training. Their role also includes the further training of staff members and local Filipinos through our successful Scholarship Programme. Most importantly, they ensure safe diving practices are adhered to. These mermaid/mermen would spend their whole lives in the ocean if they could. After perfecting your buoyancy, they will have you upside down, inches from the reef, before you know it!
Expedition Life

We appreciate that you may have travelled a long distance to join us in the Philippines and therefore we want you to settle in as quickly as possible! So, when you arrive, after you have unpacked and met the team and other volunteers, you will be given a short induction to site that is designed to give you all the information you will need to settle into your new home. The next day you’ll receive a tour of the base, be given all the information you need to stay safe whilst you’re with us, an introduction into the culture and customs of the Philippines and learn how we operate as an active conservation NGO.

In order to ensure that we continue to conserve the reefs of the Philippines, your time with us will be scheduled to allow you to gain invaluable experience and contribute to the collection of critical data. The training and survey schedule will guide you on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Expedition life can be challenging but also one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

The first weeks on site are quite intense as we take you through all the training you need to become an active member of one of our survey teams. Don’t worry though this doesn’t mean you’ll be sat in a classroom all day, after all the best place to learn about the reef is under the waves! Once you have completed induction and first aid training, after most classroom sessions we will take you out onto one of our teaching reefs, which just happen to be some of the best in the region, to put your knowledge to the test and see the incredible marine diversity for yourself.

If you are new to diving or don’t yet have your PADI Advanced Open Water (AOW) or equivalent, you will join us as a ‘dive trainee’ and you will spend the first week training up to PADI AOW. Try to complete as many knowledge reviews as you can in your manual before arriving on site to get a head start on jumping in the water! For those that are already PADI Open Water (OW) trained this first week will be a little more relaxed for you, and you will have more opportunity to snorkel and familiarise yourself with our beautiful house coral reef.

After this dive training week, AOW divers arrive, and you will spend the next two weeks on our unique Skills Development Programme (SDP), delving into the fascinating subjects of coral reef ecology and marine conservation whilst learning all about, and how to identify, the species found throughout Southern Leyte. During these two weeks you will also be introduced to numerous data collection techniques and develop your newly acquired skills on our house reef. Once you have successfully completed this training phase you will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to join our survey team and start playing an active role in the conservation of this exceptional ecosystem.

Once every four weeks we give you the chance to go on a night dive! This is an amazing experience to see a completely different side to the reef and if you’re lucky, witness the awe-inspiring bioluminescence. You will see a host of amazing creatures that only come out at night whilst further honing your dive skills. Make sure you bring a dive torch and light sticks if you want to take part.

Below is a schedule of a typical day and week on our Philippines site. Please be aware that this can, and most likely will, change depending on weather or other factors.

I learned so much in a short period and am grateful to have met such interesting, kind people! The diving was incredible.

Dana
CCC Volunteer, 2019
Monday & Tuesday
This involves dive training, SDP or surveys, depending on what stage of the schedule you are at.

Wednesday
Assuming that all survey requirements have been met, today you will enjoy a recreational dive or participate in advanced PADI training courses.

Thursday, Friday & Saturday
This involves dive training, SDP or surveys, depending on what stage of the schedule you are at. Saturday night is reserved for a social evening.

Sunday
During the first three weeks this day may be used for additional training. Otherwise this is your chance to sign-off site and visit a local beauty spot, go out on a group planned trip to some waterfalls, or simply relax on site.

Although life on site is busy there will be periods of 'downtime' when you can relax, sign-off site and leave to explore the local villages and surroundings. Please note that CCC will not be responsible for you when you are signed off site or undertaking activities that are not part of the expedition package.

There is the opportunity to socialise over a drink at the end of the day, and Saturday night is usually reserved for an end of week social evening at the project base. Although beer is available to purchase on-site there are strict rules in place regarding the quantity that can be consumed. Excessive alcohol consumption is not allowed at any time to keep all team members safe. In addition, accidents occurring while 'under the influence of alcohol' may void medical insurance cover and alcohol is a major factor in dehydration related decompression illness – you will be in the tropics after-all!

Six out of seven days are classed as 'working days' and so the bar is open between 6.00 pm and 10.00 pm and the maximum permitted alcohol consumption is two bottles of beer (330 ml) per evening or one large glass of wine (250 ml); the consumption of spirits is strictly not permitted during these days.

Extra certification Opportunities
During your stay you will be certified in the Expedition Care Programme (ECP) remote First Aid course, a one-day course that has been specially adapted to expedition situations. This will more than fulfil the Emergency First Response requirements for any further PADI courses you are intending to undertake with us (see 'Diving with CCC').

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07:00</td>
<td>Breakfast. A simple breakfast prepared by one - two members of the team. A chance to discuss any final planning details for the day’s activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07:45</td>
<td>Communal duties. Routine base camp duties to be completed each morning on a rotational basis. This could include: washing up, sweeping, mopping, getting survey equipment ready etc. It is a communal site and so everyone, including staff, are expected to take part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>Training/Surveying. Depending on your stage of training you will undertake an SDP lecture or dive theory followed by a training dive or survey dive. Any data collected with then be transferred onto recording forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch. Usually made by a member of the staff team, either taken on base or as a picnic if away from site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Training/Surveying. As the morning, after which all equipment is rinsed and put away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
<td>Dinner. Made by our local cook. A chance to review the day’s activities and plan for the next.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Evening training/lectures. Further in-depth lectures and training may be provided in the evenings to those that wish it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On successful completion of SDP, you will also be certified as a Reef Check Eco Diver, allowing you to join Reef Check dives all over the Indo-Pacific.

**Communication**

International mobile/cell phone roaming for 3G/4G is available throughout most of the Philippines, however the cost of using international roaming can be expensive. We would recommend getting a local GLOBE SIM upon arrival (your phone must be unlocked or ‘Open Line’ to accept these) for internet, texts, WhatsApp calls etc. Please note you can get a free ‘traveller’s GLOBE SIM’ at Manila airport, just past luggage collections, or they can be bought easily and cheaply in most towns.

You will need to purchase some ‘load’ too, which comes in various amounts, 100 Php’s worth will be enough to see you to site. Ask the SIM sellers help loading the load. You can then text the FBM and let family and friends know you’ve arrived safely. Additional load is available to purchase on site. Although the internet speeds may not be what you are used to, it is adequate for emails, social media updates and phone calls, but not streaming of movies etc. Internet access is not guaranteed due to the rural setting of the base.

The postal service within the Philippines is neither swift nor reliable and mail to or from the expedition base commonly takes many weeks to arrive.

The expedition base is fully equipped with satellite and radio-telecommunications to provide 24-hour communications cover. However, routine use of this facility is limited to project management and operations and is not available for personal use other than in an emergency.

**Catering**

A simple breakfast is prepared by one of the team on a rota. Don’t worry we won’t expect you to be a star chef. You’ll be paired with a seasoned team member at the beginning who will coach you until you are a dab hand in the kitchen. Lunch is usually prepared by staff, or if you will be away from site you’ll help to make up packed lunches. Evening meals are prepared by our excellent local cook, Nan Pedang and she will introduce you to the local cuisine based on seasonal availability of locally grown ingredients. Meals are served in the communal area at fixed times in order that the day’s survey activities can be effectively managed. They offer the perfect opportunity for the team to come together and chat through the day’s events. Vegetarians and vegans are catered for but please let Head Office (HO) know in advance. Similarly, if you have any dietary requirements/allergies please let HO know as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made. Fresh fruit and vegetables, while mostly available, are seasonal and availability will vary.

All main meals are provided as part of your package, cold beverages and snacks are also available, at an additional cost.

Amazing experience with one of the most beautiful reefs just off the doorstep. Friendly staff that made me feel welcome and provided great laughs

Kyle
CCC Volunteer, 2019
Diving with CCC

We are a PADI registered dive centre (3544). All CCC surveyors must be at least AOW or equivalent before starting the Skills Development Programme (SDP). Therefore, if you are not yet at this level you will join as a dive trainee and undertake the OW (if required) and AOW with our on-site Scuba Instructor (SI).

We try to get out on two dives a day, dependant on weather conditions and base logistics. There will be days when this is not possible and so volunteers should be aware that there is no guaranteed number of dives per day.

Further Dive Training

If you are joining us for at least four weeks you may opt to undertake the CCC Diver PADI specialty, and/or the PADI Rescue Diver course. If you are joining for at least 12 weeks you can undertake your PADI Divemaster Course. These further PADI courses should be booked and paid for in advance before commencing your trip as the training materials are not readily available at the project site.

If you want to gain your Divemaster consider joining us for at least 16 weeks and we'll take you through the training for free!

Diving Standards

Our Philippines site is based in a remote area and as such, we enforce conservative dive standards to keep all personnel safe. If you would like to read the full Dive Standards document, please view this on the secure volunteer area. You will be given a full dive briefing during your induction onsite.

In brief, the maximum depth permitted for any CCC dive is 28 metres and the longest bottom time employed by CCC is 60 minutes, under the condition that this does not exceed the No Decompression Limit set out in the PADI Recreational Dive Planner. However, a typical dive with us will be between 6 and 18 metres, with a bottom time of around 40 minutes.

All personnel must have a de-gas day once a week, on which no dives are permitted. The one exception to this is ‘dives’ of less than 5 metres depth conducted as part of CCC sanctioned training.
CCC Code of Conduct

This is a simplified list of our expectations of you. It is natural that you will be viewed as a representative of CCC when you are off-site, so we trust you to support our strong relationships with our local community and behave accordingly. The FBM will happily answer all your queries during your induction.

Discrimination and Behaviour

We have a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in all its forms. We expect all CCC personnel to treat all others with respect and care regardless of background, beliefs, disability, gender, age, race or sexual orientation.

Cultural Considerations

You will be briefed on arrival on cultural considerations for the Philippines. If you have any cultural or religious needs, please discuss these with HO before arrival on site and we will do everything we can to accommodate you.

Training

You will not be able to take part in activities if you have not achieved minimum requirements in training. We know that every person who joins us has different strengths and weaknesses. Our staff are extremely enthusiastic and will patiently work with you to help you succeed. In return we ask that you apply yourself fully to the training provided.

Policy

The operations manual that we have developed over the years has at its core an ethos of safety, professionalism and common sense. There is a reason for every policy, if you want to know what it is, just ask.

Environmental Considerations

Our expedition site is based meters from one of the most beautiful Marine Protected Areas in the region. Please keep this in mind throughout your stay and take all actions to reduce any negative impacts on the environment. HO and site staff are happy to provide guidance for this.

A Final Note

We are here to support you and have no doubt that you will have a wonderful experience with us. Leaving with a firmer understanding of the beautiful underwater world, with a cohort of lifelong friends from all over, and stories and photos of your adventures to treasure and share with your friends and family on your return.

The HO Team