

**Interest Groups in Local Politics: A Case Study of the Establishment of Marine
Protected Areas in San Joaquin, Iloilo**

An Undergraduate Research

Presented to the Division of Social Sciences

College of Arts and Sciences

University of the Philippines Visayas

Miagao, Iloilo

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

IVY CLARIZE A. BERNARDEZ

June 2012

Abstract

Interest groups play an important role in local policy-making. Policy space has been created for interest groups by the decentralization mandated by the Local Government Code of 1991. This study aimed to describe the role of interest groups in local policy-making especially with regards to the environment. This study explores the stages interest groups participate in more and the resources, strategies and tactics that they used in their participation. The study was conducted in the 22 coastal barangays of San Joaquin, Iloilo, with the different interest groups involved in the MPA formation as the unit of analysis. The actors involved included the municipal government, the coastal barangays, and the business sector. It was found out that the agenda setting and policy formulation stages of the policy-making process are the stages interest groups participate in more because of their access to resources such as university researchers, scientific experts. The use of expert knowledge to convince other stakeholders was effective such that there was very little opposition of the establishment of project. Although the Code provided interest groups a space in the local policy-making process, factors such as available resources and strategies and tactics affect this participation.