

NEWS BIT

Strengthening Urban Resilience for Growth with Equity (SURGE) Project

Puerto Princesa promotes nature-based tourism and biodiversity



(Left photo) Tourism stakeholders presented the policy recommendations to Puerto Princesa City Councilor Matthew Mendoza.
(Right photo) Group photo of tourism stakeholders as the forum concluded.

Around 200 tourism stakeholders from tourism establishments, community-based sustainable tourism associations, academe, environment and conservation advocacy groups, and non-government organizations in Puerto Princesa City gained deeper understanding and formulated policy recommendations for nature-based tourism and biodiversity during a forum on November 7, 2019. The forum was organized by the Puerto Princesa City government, the Puerto Princesa Underground River (PPUR) Partners Foundation, and supported by USAID's Strengthening Urban Resilience for Growth with Equity (SURGE) Project. The forum was held during the celebration of the city's Subaraw Biodiversity Festival. With more than 1.8 million tourist arrivals in Palawan for 2018, Puerto Princesa is strengthening its thrust toward nature-based tourism not only to spur growth of the local economy but also to promote biodiversity and local culture. Presentations included global and regional trends, opportunities, and challenges affecting nature-based tourism and biodiversity, conservation management, and enforcement of environmental laws. The policy recommendations were presented by the PPUR Partners Foundation as well as representatives of the tourism associations to the city government to strengthen information and education campaigns and integrate science and evidence-based planning for holistic nature-based tourism. In 2017, the USAID/SURGE Project provided technical assistance in developing the Puerto Princesa Tourism Development Plan which outlined the strategic direction for the city's tourism industry anchored on two main pillars, nature-based tourism and community-based sustainable tourism (CBST).