

About Silago, Southern Leyte

Silago used to be the last municipality in Southern Leyte accessible through the old national road system. It used to take at least six hours to reach Silago from the main cities of Leyte (Ormoc, Maasin, and Tacloban) through the Mahaplag-Sogod route, making it one of the most remote coastal areas in Southern Leyte. Recently, however, the completion of Abuyog-Silago route in 2006 has dramatically reduced the travel time from six to two hours. More importantly, it has now positioned Silago as the municipality of Southern Leyte closest to Tacloban, the capital of Region 8.

With the recent improvement of the road system and the growing tourism of Southern Leyte, Silago and its neighbor municipalities in the Pacific area (e.g. Hinunangan and Hinundayan) are gaining ground as target areas for development. The local government has made considerable efforts to recognize the value of Silago and Hinunangan in terms of their coastal resources, accessibility and location as strategic jump-off points to nearby tourism-potential areas such as San Pedro and San Pablo islands. For example, in February 2008, the local government called on CCC to make the first reef assessment in San Pedro and San Pablo islands to help determine and manage its coastal resources for environmental and economic benefits.

As these coastal areas begin to strive towards gaining environmental and economic benefits, a community's active role is highly critical in setting the direction for development. While still in their formative stage, communities like Silago need to be properly informed and educated so that developmental initiatives can easily be directed toward responsible tourism and sustainable objectives. Hence, it is only timely that marine education be given priority in coastal areas like Silago.