

Modification propels traditional canoe further

By Thompson Marango

PERSONALIZED AND FITTED with an outboard motor, a traditional outrigger canoe not only extends accessible fishing ground but also its reliability when the strokes of a paddle and the breezes could not fill the sail enough to propel the canoe forward.

Via Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Phase two of The Grace of the Sea Project, experiments the first tra-

ditionally built sail canoe modified to cater for an outboard motor this week.

A merge of local and present-day technology when completed, the canoe, assembled by experts from JICA and Fisheries Department in collaboration with villagers of Mangaliliu was pushed out to sea early this week for a successful test run.

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The launching of an outboard motor equipped modified traditional canoe

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The project is indispensable to develop and manage off the reef fisheries for the sustainable use of coastal resource.

One of the most important factor is to minimize the operational cost for the off the reef fisheries, especially the cost of boat and fuel. Boat made of FRP (Fiber-Reinforced Plastic) or aluminum, and size of outboard engine currently in use is very expensive and it is difficult to make

fisheries operation profitable.

From a workshop this week, participants acquire information and skills to improvise with their generations handed down canoe build skills with slide modification to accommodate a small size outboard engine.

When launched, the sample canoe verified the effectiveness of the project by sailing a distance of 3 miles from Mangaliliu to Hat Island in less than an hour.

As part of the project, two Fish Aggregating Devices, (FADs), were located within accessible distance from the area.

The FADs are stationed closer to shore compared to existing ones that can only be access by boat to ensure their accessibly to canoes.

Although a couple more adjustments may be required to enhance the performance of the canoe, the villagers are already planning how such canoe could be utilized.

"On a good day like this, the canoe will sail with ease to the FAD (fishing ground), once there the sail will be rolled up and the outboard will be used to troll around the FAD," Mangaliliu Chief, Mormor explains.

"While in the past we relied entirely on our paddles and sails to go that far," said a pleased Mangaliliu Chief.

During the workshop participants also learned how to operate and maintain outboard motors.