

VIP CORALS:

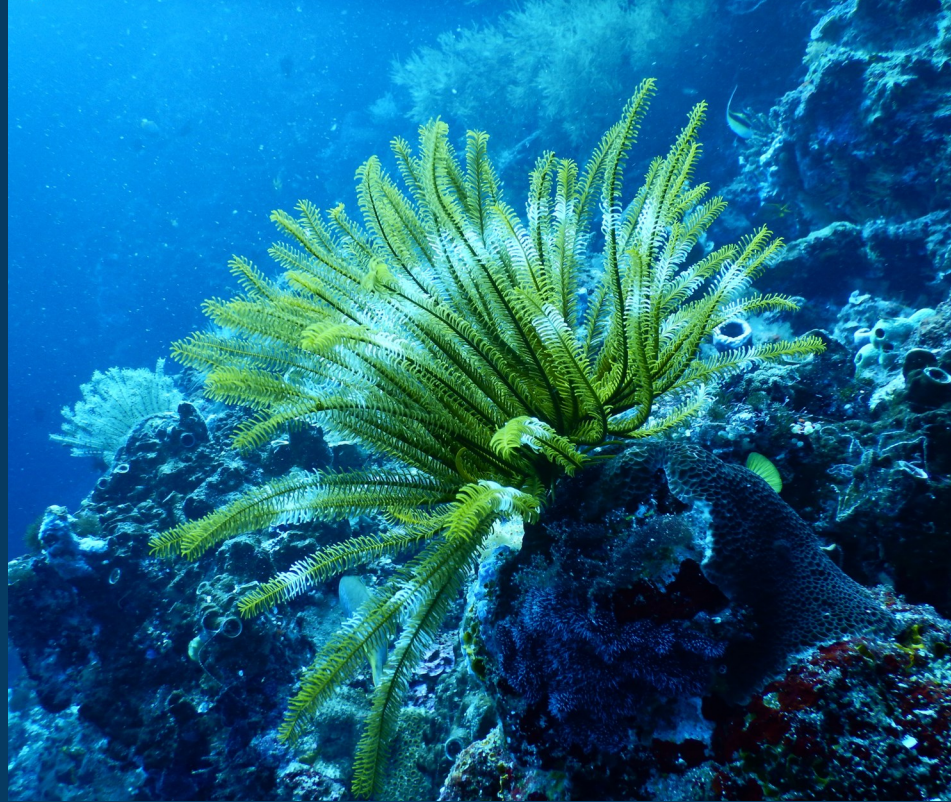
BatStateU
Research Center
for Marine
Biodiversity
In the **Verde**
Island Passage

The Verde Island Passage (VIP) is the center of the center for marine shore fish biodiversity in the world. It is the heart of marine life of the coral triangle.

VIP is one of the most important fishing grounds where more than half of the marine species in the country inhabit. It is one of the shipping routes that provide services in bringing goods from one dock to another, and is recognized as a tourist attraction which increases the livelihood of coastal communities surrounding it.

However, these also pose a significant threat to its marine ecosystem. Overpopulation, pollution, shipping activities, mining activities, over fishing, and even climate change pose serious and harmful effects to Verde Island Passage. Local governments and organizations have taken efforts in conserving and protecting its aquatic resources, but the risk remains high.

For its part, Batangas State University has established a marine research center called



the “Verde Island Passage Center for Oceanographic Research and Aquatic Life Sciences” or simply VIP CORALS. This marine center houses different facilities and equipment namely: Main Laboratory Building, Outdoor Hatchery Facility, and Dive Locker Facility that are necessary for providing research, education and extension services. It focuses on the marine shore ecosystems which is home to about 300 corals, 1700 shore fishes, turtles, dolphins, whales and other marine invertebrates and plants. These ecosystems provide food and nursing ground to higher organisms, and support local livelihood and ecotourism.

VIP CORALS will help sustain the richness and diversity of the Verde Island Passage through research projects that will monitor the marine ecosystem. It shall also form linkages with surrounding institutions, organizations, local government units and common fisherfolks.