



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MIMAROPA REGION

No. 822 Quezon Avenue, Brgy. Paligsahan, Quezon City
www.mimaropa.dilg.gov.ph

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

August 15, 2022

HON. DENNIS M. SOCRATES

Governor

Province of Palawan

**RE : ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL
LAWS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
RECLAMATION PROJECTS IN CORON,
PALAWAN**

THRU : VIRGILIO L. TAGLE
Provincial Director, DILG Palawan

Dear **Governor Socrates**:

This refers to the herein attached letter dated August 08, 2022 of Dir. Lormelyn E. Claudio, Regional Executive Director of DENR MIMAROPA, addressed to the undersigned, regarding the above subject-matter.

Allegedly, there are three (3) illegal reclamation activities in Coron, Palawan that are under the project of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Coron and the Provincial Government of Palawan. Said Projects that are located in Fernvale Subdivision and Coron Public Market failed to secure the necessary Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) from the DENR and Notice to Proceed from the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA).

In order to provide measures to mitigate and prevent further damage to the area, Notices of Violation were already issued by OIC-CENRO Rodney G. Verian of DENR-Coron to cease and desist further activities in the said projects.

In this regard, we respectfully refer the said environmental concern to your attention and to exercise strict compliance on the existing laws pertaining to environment and natural resources. This referral is in view of our exercise of supervisory function over LGUs to ensure that laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the environment are strictly complied with.

You may also provide us your comments relative to the given issues to apprise us of the current status of the projects, for our information and kindly forward the same to our office through this email address: dilgmimaropa@gmail.com.

Attached herewith is a copy of Dir. Claudio's letter for your information.

Very truly yours,



WILHELM M. SUYKO, CESO IV
Regional Director

cc: **LORMELYN E. CLAUDIO, CESO IV**
Regional Executive Director
DENR-MIMAROPA
mimaroparegion@denr.gov.ph

ORD/ARD/ram/ilp
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
MIMAROPA Region

08 August 2022

DIR. WILHELM M. SUYKO, CESO IV
Regional Director
Department of Interior and Local Government
822 Quezon Avenue, Barangay Paligsahan
Quezon City

Dear Sir,

May we respectfully bring to your attention the issues and concerns regarding the three (3) illegal reclamation activities in Coron, Palawan as raised by the Sagip Coron Palawan (SCP), two of which are projects under the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Coron and Provincial Government of Palawan.

Based on our review and evaluation of survey and field reports, massive cutting and/or destruction of mangroves in the reclaimed areas commenced from 2014 to 2021. During our joint inspections and meetings with the SCP, representatives and Contractors of the Provincial Government (PG) of Palawan and Coron LGU, concerned Barangay Officials, Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), Palawan Council for Sustainable Development and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) District Engineering Office, it was noted that several environmental laws have been violated in the implementation of the reclamation projects of the LGUs. Section 43 of Presidential Decree No. 705 (*Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines*), Section 4 of Republic Act No. 7161 (*An Act Incorporating Certain Sections of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1977, as Amended, to Presidential Decree 705, as Amended, otherwise known as the "Forestry Code of the Philippines" and Providing Amendments Thereto, by Increasing the Forest Charges on Timber and Forest Products*) and Section 99 (Conversion of Mangroves) of Republic Act No. 10654 (*An Act to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, Amending Republic Act 8550, known as the "Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998" and for Other Purposes*), all of which are explicitly prohibiting the cutting and destruction of mangroves. In addition, Section 5 of DAO 2018-14 which states that, "*No reclamation project shall be allowed unless an Area Clearance is first secured from the DENR*" was also violated by the LGUs.

Please be also informed that two (2) of the illegal reclamation projects which are located in Fernvale Subdivision and the Coron Public Market failed to secure Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) from the Environmental Management Bureau, Area Clearance from the DENR and Notice to Proceed from the Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA). Further, this Office has withdrawn its recommendation for the issuance of Area Clearance to Coron Bay Development Project (CBDP) under the Provincial Government of Palawan due to the violations of the laws stated above. Also, the ECCs issued to the PG Palawan in 2007 and 2009 were already cancelled by the DENR-EMB MIMAROPA on 12 May 2022. Moreover, OIC, CENRO Rodney G. Verian of DENR-CENRO Coron has already issued Notices of Violation (NOVs) on

22 June 2022 wherein the proponents of the said projects were directed to cease and desist from further activities and immediately implement mitigating measures to prevent further damage to the marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Likewise, the PRA recently issued Resolution No. 5541-2022 on June 16, 2022, which ordered the forfeiture of the 22-hectare reclaimed area under the Coron Bay Development Project in favor of the national government. During our joint inspection and meeting with stakeholders and concerned parties on 22 July 2022, the PRA also agreed to impose appropriate sanctions to the proponents responsible for the illegal reclamation operations in Coron, Palawan.

As such, may we ardently request your support and assistance as the lead government instrumentality responsible in the general supervision over the LGUs of Palawan, thru the implementation and enforcement of appropriate laws being carried out by your Office, BFAR, PRA and the DENR. It becomes more challenging to draw the compliance of the private sector and industries when LGUs display non-compliance to established laws, rules and regulations.

Thank you for your attention and please be with us in enforcing the laws for the protection of our environment and natural resources and welfare of our generation and posterity.

Yours sincerely,


LORMELYN E. CLAUDIO, CESO IV
Regional Executive Director



Cc: **SECRETARY MARIA ANTONIA YULO LOYZAGA**
Department of Environment and Natural Resources

ATTY. BENJAMIN C. ABALOS, JR.
Secretary, Department of the Interior
and Local Government

ATTY. JUAN MIGUEL T. CUNA, CESO I
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ATTY. ANALIZA REBUELTA – TEH, CESO I
DENR Undersecretary for Finance, Information Systems
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Head, Task Force Build Back Better Secretariat

ATTY. JANILO E. RUBIATO
General Manager and CEO and Member of the Board
Philippine Reclamation Authority

RD ELIZER S. SALILIG
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ATTY. TEODORO JOSE S. MATTA
Executive Director, Palawan Council
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PENRO FELIZARDO B. CAYATOC
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OIC-CENRO RODNEY G. VERIAN
Coron, Palawan

MR. MARION RAAGAS
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