



Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE**  
**PUERTO PRINCESA CITY**

South National Highway, Bgy. Sta. Monica, Puerto Princesa City  
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Email Address: cenropuertoprincesa@denr.gov.ph

January 31, 2022

**MR. DANIEL SANTELICES, et al.**

Sitio Aplaya, Malatgao Road  
Brgy. Malatgao, Narra, Palawan  
Cellphone No. 09123420588

Dear Mr. Santelices, et al.,

This pertains to your letter dated January 20, 2022, lodged before the Office of His Excellency Rodrigo Roa Duterte thru the Presidential Action Center which was referred to this Office thru channel bearing Code No. GL-AKA-01-11-2022-047 concerning the alleged denial and unfavorably biased decision of the undersigned on your long time tenurial application of land situated at Sitio Magarwak, Brgy. Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City.

Foremost, the denial of your tenurial application for Socialized Industrial Forest Management Agreements (SIFMA) were due to the following grounds:

1. The subject area was located within a **“Restricted Use Zone”** based on the Environmentally Critical Area Network (ECAN) Map of the City of Puerto Princesa (*Attached hereto as Annex “A”*). In addition, Section 31 of Puerto Princesa City Ordinance No. 560<sup>1</sup> (*Attached hereto as Annex “B”*) prohibits Forest Co-Management Agreements within an area declared as Restricted Use Zone. Said provision is hereby quoted in part, to wit:

*“Restricted Use Zone prohibits Forest Co-Management Agreements such as SIFMA, CBFMA, ISF, FLAg, FLAgT and Lease including residential, infrastructure developments, exploration and extraction or other mining activities” (emphasis supplied)*

2. The inspection and investigation conducted by the DENR-CENRO, Puerto Princesa personnel shows that the subject area does not qualify to be a SIFMA site pursuant to DENR Administrative Order (DAO) No. 30<sup>2</sup>, series of 2004, since it is still a forested area and covered with dense vegetation. Section 4 of DAO No. 30 clearly identifies the areas that may be available and suitable to be a SIFMA site. Said section provides the following:

*“Section 4. Areas Available for SIFMA. SIFMAs may cover all grasslands, brushlands and open denuded forest lands suitable as*

<sup>1</sup> Revised Zoning Ordinance of the City of Puerto Princesa

<sup>2</sup> Revised Rules and Regulations Governing the Socialized Industrial Forest Management Program

*production forest under the jurisdiction of the DENR, including those within government reforestation projects; areas not comprising the initial component of, or areas that are not otherwise to be classified under, the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS); areas not covered by Certificate of Ancestral Domain/Land Claims (CADC/CALC), Certificate of Ancestral Domains/Land Title (CADT/CALT); areas not covered by prior vested rights, licenses, permits or management agreement; -xxx-"* (emphasis added)

As can be gleaned from the aforequoted section, the area does not fall in any of the enumerated classifications. It cannot be considered as denuded forest<sup>3</sup> since it is a second growth forest. Neither may it be considered as grassland nor brushland<sup>4</sup> as it is a forested area covered with dense vegetation.

Relative to the foregoing, as per inspection and investigation of the DENR-CENRO Team, they found out that the area was a second growth forest containing Mangkono/Ironwood, Batino and Malabayabas trees associated with climbing bamboo and pitcher plants. There were other species found in the area like Putian (locally known as *Arot-ot*) which only thrive in a rough mountainous and ultramafic kind of soil. Thus, these species must be protected since it is considered as indigenous species that play an important role in the sustainability of the ecosystem in the subject area.

With regard to your contention that you were the superior claimant in the subject area, please be informed that the status of the land was a Public Forest/Timberland as per approved Land Classification Map No. 1246, Project No. 1-E, certified on January 15, 1936. As such, the subject area remains to be part of the property of the State and is therefore not susceptible to any private ownership nor claims. Hence, it is still the State which has the absolute ownership and paramount claims and rights over the subject area.

Furthermore, records of this office shows that your father, Mr. Lorenzo Santelices, was granted with a Certificate of Stewardship Contract (CSC) by the CENRO, Puerto Princesa on September 29, 1989, bearing CSC No. 04260181, as well as Rudy Santelices (one of the complainants) on March 15, 1994, bearing Certificate of Stewardship Contract (CSC) No. 042601979, both located in Sitio San Carlos, Brgy. Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City, not far from the subject area. Despite of long years given by the Office for them to develop the said lands, they still failed to satisfactorily comply with the terms and conditions of the agreement. Hence, said CSCs were both cancelled on July 31, 2003, by the then PENRO Atty. Virgilio B. Tiongson, due to their inability to develop the area as stipulated in the terms and conditions of the contract (*Attached are copies of Cancellation Orders as Annexes "C-1" and "C-2"*). Consequently, all rights derived therefrom were automatically reverted to the government upon the cancellation of the CSC.

<sup>3</sup> Section 3 (3.5) of DAO No. 30, s. 2004 defines "open and denuded forest" as land that was formerly forested but which has been depleted of natural forest cover and is predominantly covered by grasses, herbaceous species or bare soil.

<sup>4</sup> Section 3 (3.4) of DAO No. 30, s. 2004 defines "brushland" as land which is predominantly covered with shrubs or short, stunted trees.



In your letter dated November 30, 2020 you claimed that there were planted Mahogany and fruit trees in the subject area. However, as per inspection and verification of the DENR-CENRO Team, the area that you pointed to the team was a second growth forest with no signs of any development like planted Mahogany and fruit trees nor even human trails heading towards the area that he was claiming.

As to the alleged issue of illegal quarrying activities, the DENR-CENRO Team did not find any traces of quarrying activities during its inspection in the subject area. The team even launched a drone to take aerial pictures of the area and there were no indications nor presence of the alleged quarrying activities. Moreover, please be informed that DENR does not have an authority to grant or permit any quarrying activities since the authority to regulate the same was already devolved and vested to the Local Government Units through Puerto Princesa City Mining and Regulatory Board (CMRB) upon the enactment of the Local Government Code of 1991.

Furthermore, the undersigned vehemently denies that I allowed any individuals or entities to occupy and construct any structures within the subject area nor even in any timberland areas within the jurisdiction of CENRO, Puerto. Accordingly, it is noteworthy to emphasize that the DENR does not have control nor authority to issue a Tax Declaration as the same were vested in the Assessor's Office.

Finally, the assertion of the complainants that the undersigned was tainted with bias in denying their application does not hold water since the matter was ruled upon based on the findings and evaluation of the DENR-CENRO Team so as to the existing laws, DENR Administrative Orders, rules and regulations.

In view of the foregoing, the undersigned respectfully informs the herein complainants that your application for tenurial instrument cannot be entertained and processed anymore by this Office since the subject area is situated on a Restricted Use Zone and that it is not qualified to be a SIFMA site considering that it is a second growth forest with dense vegetation.


We trust that you have been properly informed.

Truly yours,

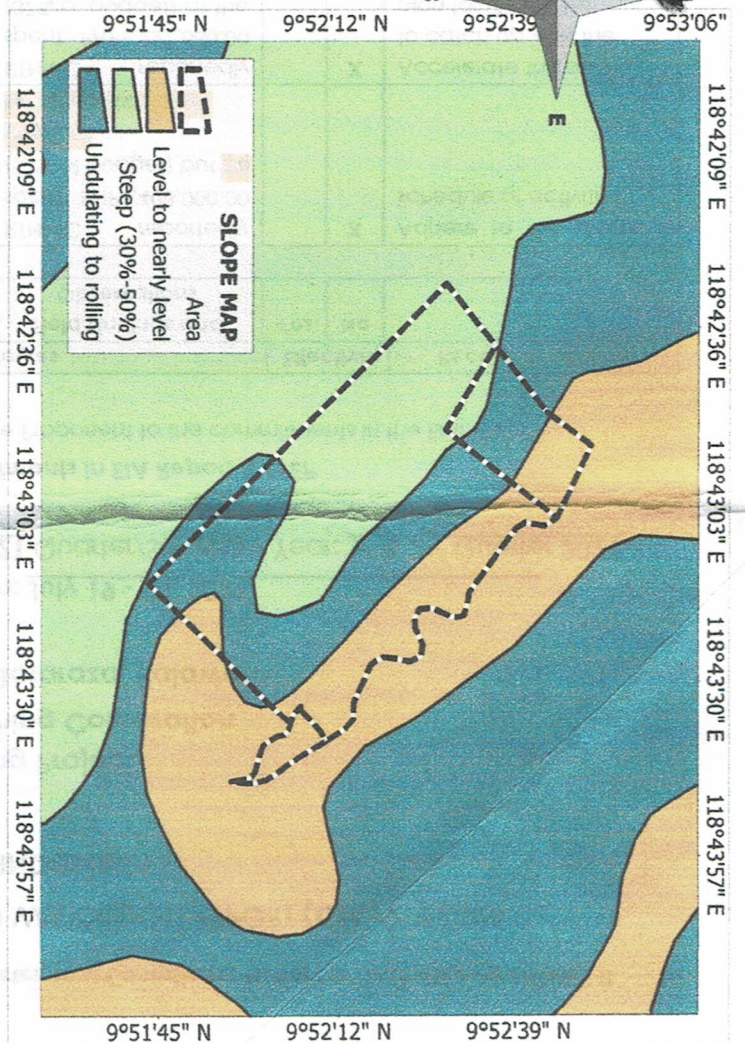
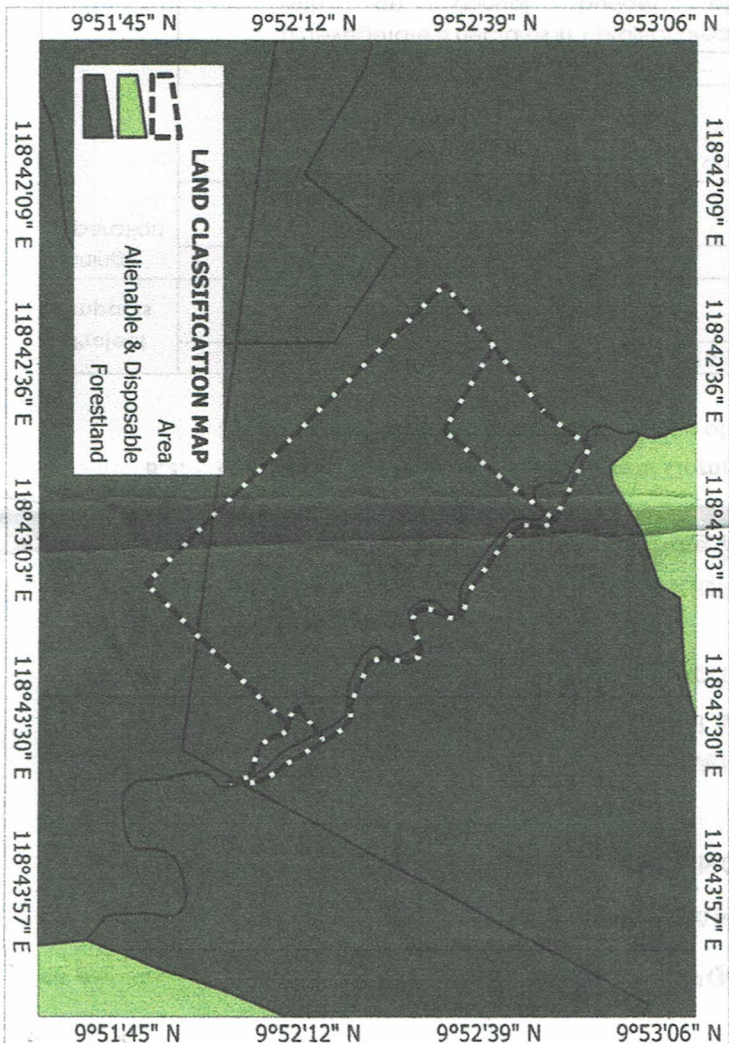
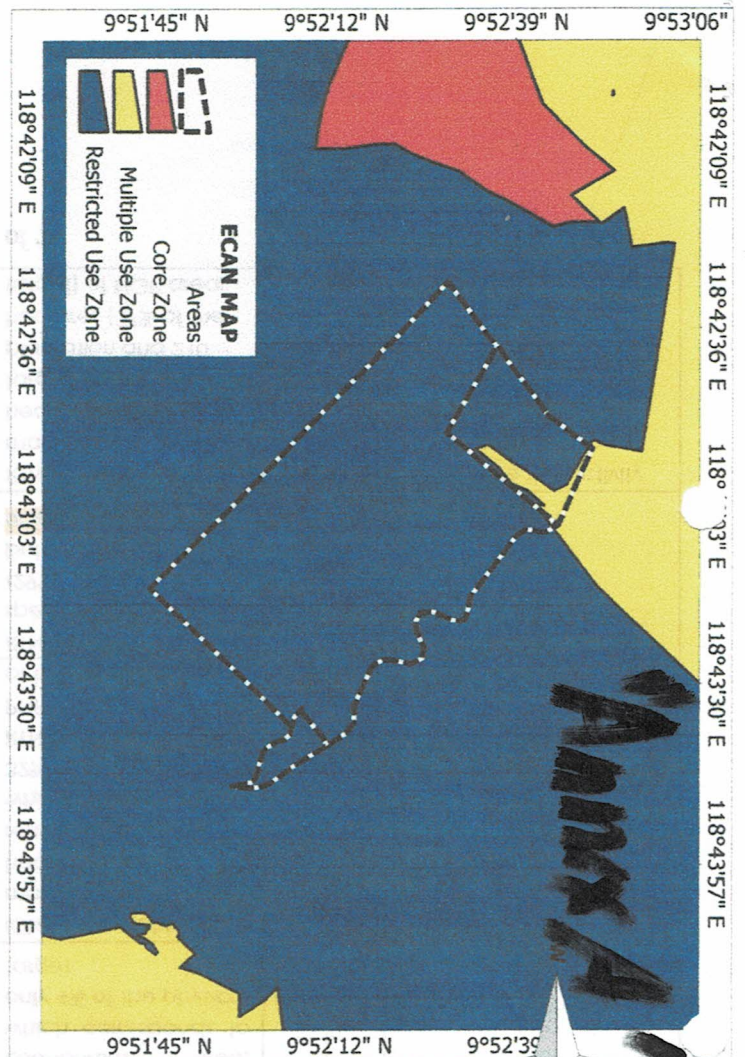
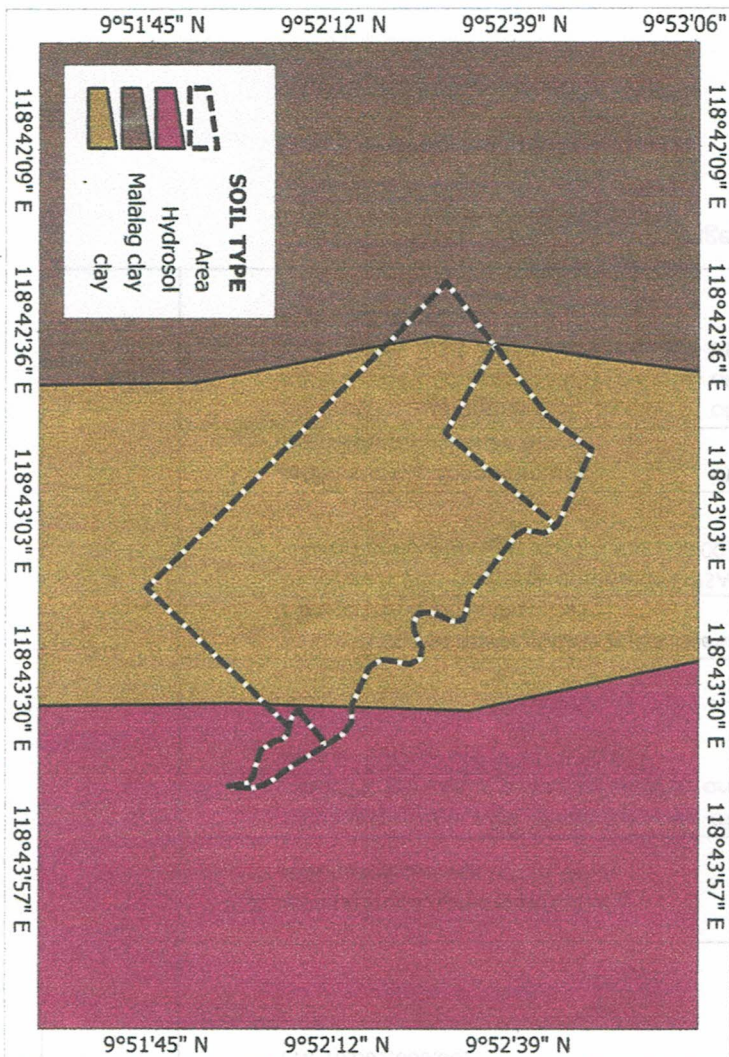
  
**FELIZARDO B. CAYATOC**  
CENR Officer

*Copy furnished:*

1. Presidential Action Center Malacañang Palace, Manila
2. Head Executive Assistant  
DENR, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
3. Ms. Merlinda R. Manila  
Head DENR Action Center/Hotline  
DENR, Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
4. The RED, DENR-MIMAROPA Region
5. The PENRO, Puerto Princesa City
6. file

DENR MIMAROPA REGION  
CENRO PUERTO PRINCESA  
**RELEASED**  
NO: 419  
DATE: 2-7-22  
RV: 









Above photos were taken by Forester Arjay T. Gregas using a drone during the conduct of inspection/verification of the area applied for SIFMA by Mr. Daniel Santelices located in km. 16 to 18 of Barangay Bacungan, this City



## Section 31. Use Regulations in the Different Zones.

"Annex B"

## a. Use Regulations in the ECAN Zones

<i>Terrestrial ECAN Zone</i>	<i>Allowed Activities</i>	<i>Prohibited Use</i>
Core Zone – Primary Forest	Scientific research, resource inventory and monitoring authorized by the DCEPC Allowed traditional activities of indigenous peoples (religious and cultural practices which are not causing ecosystem degradation) Restoration/rehabilitation of degraded areas (natural regeneration, assisted-natural regeneration) in areas authorized by the board.	Residential development Forest Co-Management Agreements (SIFMA, CBFMA, ISF, FLAg, FLAgT, Lease) Exploration and extraction or other mining activities Infrastructure development
Core Zone – Habitat of endangered fauna (excluding habitat located in primary forest)	Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded portions (degraded habitats of endangered species) in areas authorized by the DCEPC Scientific research, resource inventory and monitoring in areas authorized by the DCEPC Non-obtrusive and non-disruptive ecotourism activities (regulated hiking, sight-seeing, bird watching and photography) in ecotourism areas (within core zones) designated and approved by the board Allowed traditional activities of indigenous peoples (religious and cultural practices which are not causing ecosystem degradation)	Residential development Forest Co-Management Agreements (SIFMA, CBFMA, ISF, FLAg, FLAgT, Lease) Exploration and extraction or other mining activities Infrastructure development
Core Zone – Critical slopes	Restoration/rehabilitation of degraded portions (denuded critical slopes >50%) Scientific research, resource inventory and monitoring in areas authorized by the DCEPC Allowed traditional activities of indigenous peoples (religious and cultural practices which are not causing ecosystem degradation) Regulated hiking and mountain climbing	Residential development Forest Co-Management Agreements (SIFMA, CBFMA, ISF, FLAg, FLAgT, Lease) Exploration and extraction or other mining activities Infrastructure development
Restricted Use Zone	Restoration/rehabilitation of degraded areas Wildlife management in areas designated and approved by the DCEPC Board Supervised nature-based forest tourism and recreation (regulated botanical tours, walking/sight-seeing, nature photography, bird watching) in areas designated and approved by	Residential development Forest Co-Management Agreements (SIFMA, CBFMA, ISF, FLAg, FLAgT, Lease) Exploration and extraction or other mining activities Infrastructure development



"Annex C-1"

IN RE :

**CANCELLATION OF CERTIFICATE OF STEWARDSHIP  
CONTRACT NO. 04260181 GRANTED TO MR LORENZO  
SANTELICES, HUSBAND OF MRS. ESTRELLA P.  
SANTELICES LOCATED AT SO. SAN CARLOS, BGY.  
BACUNGAN, PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN**

On September 29, 1989, the Community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) of Puerto Princesa City issued Certificate of Stewardship Contract No. 04260181 to Mr. Lorenzo Santelices, husband of Mrs. Estrella P. Santelices to develop, manage and administer the parcel of forest land located at Sitio San Carlos, Bgy. Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

On July 25, 2003, Mrs. Estrella P. Santelices filed a letter to the PENR Office voluntarily surrendering the Certificate of Stewardship Contract awarded to her late husband, Mr. Lorenzo Santelices and requesting for the termination of the said contract because of his inability to develop the area in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated therein. Despite of their industry and diligence in developing the area for the past years, the crops planted were stunted and no profitable benefits that were derived. Their dreams and aspirations for better life never realized.

On July 28, 2003, CDO-II Felizardo B. Cayatoc inspected/evaluated the area based on the above request and confirmed that the area was not fully developed. This is due to the above stated reasons hence, a failure to comply with the terms and conditions stipulated in the Contract and the lack of interest to continue the duties and responsibilities. CDO-II Cayatoc recommends that the CSC be cancelled.

WHEREFORE, premises considered, this Office is of the view for the reason to order, as it hereby ORDERS the CANCELLATION of Certificate of Stewardship Contract No. 04260181 granted to Mr. Lorenzo Santelices (deceased), husband of Mrs. Estrella P. Santelices over a parcel of land situated at Sitio San Carlos, Barangay Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. All improvements and/or development found within the area are also ORDERED FORFEITED in favor of the government.

The CENRO of Puerto Princesa City is likewise ORDERED to take immediately possession and control of the area for its management.

**SO ORDERED.**

Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines, July 31, 2003.

ATTY. VIRGILIO B. TIONGSON  
CENRO





REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
REGION IV  
PROVINCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE  
STA. MONICA, PUERTO PRINCESA CITY

"Annex C-2"

IN RE : CANCELLATION OF CERTIFICATE OF STEWARDSHIP  
CONTRACT NO. 042601979 GRANTED TO MR. RUDY  
SANTELICES LOCATED AT SO. SAN CARLOS, BGY.  
BACUNGAN, PUERTO PRINCESA CITY, PALAWAN

On March 15, 1994, the community Environment and Natural Resources Officer (CENRO) of Puerto Princesa City issued Certificate of Stewardship Contract No. 042601979 to Mr. Rudy Santelices to develop, manage and administer the parcel of forest land located at Sitio San Carlos, Bgy. Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

On July 25, 2003, Mr. Rudy Santelices filed a letter to the PENR Office voluntarily surrendering the Certificate of Stewardship Contract which was issued to him and requesting for the termination of the said contract because of his inability to develop the area in accordance with the terms and conditions stipulated therein. Most of the area have underneath rocks and accordingly despite of his industry and diligence the crops planted were stunted and did not bear good fruits.

On July 28, 2003, CDO-II Felizardo B. Cayatoc inspected/evaluated the area based on the request and confirmed that only a small portion of the area was developed. The reason is due to the above stated reasons hence, a failure to comply with the terms and conditions stipulated in the Contract. CDO-II Cayatoc recommends that the CSC be cancelled.

WHEREFORE, premises considered, this Office is of the view for the reason to order, as it hereby ORDERS the CANCELLATION of Certificate of Stewardship Contract No. 042601979 granted to Mr. Rudy Santelices over a parcel of land situated at Sitio San Carlos, Barangay Bacungan, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. All improvements and/or development found within the area are also ORDERED FORFEITED in favor of the government.

The CENRO of Puerto Princesa City is likewise ORDERED to take immediately possession and control of the area for its management.

**SO ORDERED.**

Puerto Princesa City, Palawan, Philippines, July 31, 2003.

  
ATTY. VIRGILIO B. TIONGSON  
CENRO