



July 12, 2022

LORMELYN E. CLAUDIO

Regional Executive Director
DENR MIMAROPA

Attention:

CARMEN RAMINA S. TUBAL

Chief – Wildlife Resource Permitting Section

Dear Director Claudio,

A conservation day to you!

Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (MBCFI) is a non-stock, non-profit organization that conserves the environment, biodiversity, and natural resources in Mindoro Island, Philippines. The organization continues to promote greater awareness and concern for Mindoro's environment through improved information campaigns, capacity building, empowering communities, and enjoining them in formulating and implementing responsive policies for effective resource management and conservation.

For the past few years, MBCFI has been involved in conserving the critically endangered Tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*). One of our involvements includes a partnership with Chester Zoo. I was recently accepted as one of the six awardees for the Chester Zoo William Oliver Philippine Champion Award 2019 with a proposed study entitled Dietary Analysis of Tamaraw (*Bubalus mindorensis*) in Mindoro Island, Philippines. This study aims to conduct a dietary analysis using fecal samples from the Tamaraw to identify a vegetation diet list through metabarcoding. This study will be conducted in both Mts. Iglit-Baco Natural Park (MIBNP), Mindoro Occidental and Mt. Gimparay, Mindoro Oriental.

In addition, a biophysical profile survey will also be conducted in Mt. Gimparay to provide comprehensive species lists and biodiversity data of the site to support conservation efforts in the area, and generate a biodiversity profile of the site, which will serve as a baseline for comparison with subsequent monitoring surveys and establish biodiversity monitoring plots for subsequent regular monitoring surveys.

MBCFI has presented the research proposal to the MIBNP-PAMB, and approval for the endorsement was obtained from the body last November 2019. Please see the attached Resolution No. 2019-08, series of 2019 from the MIBNP-PAMB, including an endorsement from the DENR-Tamaraw Conservation Program.

Tamaraw Conservation Program (TCP) granted an endorsement for both the GP, which recognizes the project outcomes to achieve the Tamaraw Conservation and Management Action Plan (TCMAP) 2019



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– 2028's Goals 1, 8 & 10. These include mobilizing the species' all-natural areas of Mindoro that are suitable, strengthening law enforcement and wildlife crime prevention, and conducting a comprehensive socio-environmental assessment of the region to assist the integration of conservation objectives with the ongoing socio-economic dynamic of the Alangan Tribe. The TCMAP has been endorsed by IUCN SSC Asian Wild Cattle Specialist Group and DENR.

MBCFI was granted a Gratuitous Permit (GP) by your office last 2020 to conduct the collection of specimens for the study. However, surveys were not conducted due to the onset of the pandemic and strict local protocols. An extension of the GP validity was requested and issued until the 13th of May 2022. Alongside the GP, our organization needs to go through Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) applications with the communities of the selected project sites to obtain the Certificate of Precondition, given that the study will be conducted within their ancestral domain. Strict local health protocols and the election season have delayed our FPIC applications to collect the specimens within the said extended validity. Currently, the applications for both project sites are in progress; both communities have accepted the project, but we have yet to conduct the Memorandum of Agreement Signing activity, which is expected to be completed within the 3rd quarter of this year 2022.

We hope to start the survey in the 4th quarter of 2022. In this regard, may we kindly request for another extension on our GP, hopefully with a validity of two years which includes the following:

- Collection of fecal and flora samples in both MIBNP and Mt. Gimparay for the dietary analysis (1); and
- Collection of fauna (birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and insects) and flora in Mt. Gimparay for the biophysical profile survey (2).

Attached are the research project overview and the GP initially granted for your reference. For any queries or clarifications, don't hesitate to get in touch with us through this email (elyza_p_tan@mbcfi.org.ph) or these numbers (639) 17-129-7072. We look forward to your favorable response. Thank you very much.

Respectfully yours,

ELYZA HAZEL TAN
Project Development and Resource Officer
Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc.

Noted by:

GRACE C. DIAMANTE
Executive Director
Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation, Inc.