

**DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**  
**OFFICE: DOT MIMAROPA REGION**



Meeting Report					
Subject/Title: <b>MIMAROPA Regional Tourism Committee (MRTC) 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Meeting</b>					
Date	<b>June 14, 2022</b>	Time Started	<b>09:30 am</b>	Time Finished	<b>12:00 pm</b>
Location/ Venue	<b>Virtual Meeting via the Zoom Application</b>				
Attendees:					
Members					
1. ATTY. BEVIENNE G. MALATEO – DOT / MRTC CHAIRPERSON					
2. MR. MAXIMO C. LANDRITO - DENR					
3. MS. MARIA MELISSA L. ENDANGAN – DENR					
4. DR. ROMMEL C. LIZAN – DOH					
5. ENGR. DENNIS ABAGON – DPWH					
6. MS. JULLIE KAYE F. DIAMANTE – DSWD					
7. MAJOR ALLAN MANUEL - PPA					
8. MS. BLESSED MONTANO – OCCIDENTAL MINDORO PROVINCE					
9. MS. KIMBERLY MAE E. VELASQUEZ – ORIENTAL MINDORO PROVINCE					
10. MR. GERARDO M. JAMILLA – MARINDUQUE PROVINCE					
11. MS. MARIBEL C. BUÑI – PALAWAN					
12. MR. DEMETRIO ALVOR – PUERTO PRINCESA CITY					
Secretariat					
1. MS. GLADYS A. QUESEA					
2. FAYE ANGELI A. REYES					
3. MS. ABIGAIL CRUZ					
4. MS. PAULINE LACAP					
5. MS. DANICA NEPOMUCENO					
<b>48 % of MRTC member agencies were present during the meeting. (12 out of 25)</b>					
Summary of Points Discussed					
Opening Statement	Atty. Bevienne G. Malateo, Regional Director of DOT – 4B, acknowledged the attendees for the second quarter meeting. The Philippines has attracted more arrivals since the reopening of the tourism industry. Revenge travel has become a norm as it is shown on the data generated by the regional office covering domestic and international arrivals.  In line with this, an increase in revenue is also expected and the region continues to develop a sustainable industry with stronger programs and partnerships with other Tourism Related Agencies.  The following are the MRTC Meeting Agenda:  a. Requirements and Rules and Regulations for the Approval of Reclamation Projects and Reclamation				

	<p>Components of Development/Infrastructure Projects; and Status of Reclamation in MIMAROPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Guidelines Governing the Operations and Recognition of Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Establishments</li> <li>c. Status of Ongoing Tourism Road Infrastructure Project (TRIP)</li> <li>d. Peace Village project</li> </ul>
<p>Requirements and Rules and Regulations for the Approval of Reclamation Projects and Reclamation Components of Development/Infrastructure Projects; and Status of Reclamation in MIMAROPA</p>	<p>Engr. Eduardo Destura, Division Manager for Planning and Evaluation Department, from Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA) discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Brief information about Reclamation Initiatives in MIMAROPA. The two (2) approved projects are Puerto Princesa City and Coron, Palawan. The Puerto Princesa Reclamation Project consists of 32 hectares for coastal renewal. 9 hectares are completed and developed for recreational purposes. The Reclamation in Coron is for 50 hectares covered by a memorandum of agreement between PRA and the province of Palawan. The latest update is that the Province of Palawan is coordinating with the Office of the President and PRA to clarify matters regarding the ongoing issues.</li> <li>➤ The Flowchart is the Processing of Applications to Reclaim based on the E.O. 74 and PRA A.O. No. 2019-4. Projects are classified between Mixed-use Development and Reclamation Components.</li> <li>➤ Reclamation projects are considered to be mixed-use requiring the disposal of lands by the government and private sectors. Reclamation Components are required and vital components of major infrastructure like bridges, ports, and roads. The requirements for these two projects vary as defined in the IRR. The IRR requires a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for its initial step to comply with the qualification requirement. MOU outlines the requirements, processes, and timelines of the requirements. The proponent must comply over a period of 2 years after which PRA will process the application.</li> <li>➤ The Mandatory Requirements include a Feasibility Study, Detailed Engineering Design, ECC and Area Clearance, and Advisory of Union from DOF, NEDA, and DENR. Proponent is given a maximum period of 24 months from the execution of MOU within which to comply with the complete Mandatory Requirements and payment of review fee.</li> <li>➤ Once completed, the proponent may pass it to PRA for RRO Reviews/ Evaluates Mandatory Requirements and submits to Management Completed Staff Work (CSW) (within 60 c.d. from issuance of NOFC).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PRA Board takes appropriate action on the application to reclaim (within 90 c.d. from issuance of NOFC).</li> <li>➤ There are two different processes for each type of project. For Mixed-use Development, after the board approval, the PRA shall subject the proposal or application to the competitive challenge. This will be a public bidding or auction to solicit counter proposals challenging the board to approve the terms and conditions of the original proponent. For Reclamation Components, there will be no competitive selection under the premise that reclamation as a major infrastructure is vital as a back-up area of that major infrastructure. Ergo, for this kind of project, there is no selling of land, no land sharing and the land shall be used solely by the proponent for its intended use.</li> <li>➤ In the first case, once the challenge is done, PRA will award the project to the winning bidder/challenger. Thereafter, it will require the signing of the MOA / Implementing Agreement (IA) within 20 working days from the approval or award, as the case may be.</li> <li>➤ The proponent will submit the complete pre-construction requirements within 30 c.d. from the signing of the MOA/IA.</li> <li>➤ PRA reviews the pre-construction documents and issues the Notice to Proceed (NTP) (within 30 c.d. from the complete submission of the pre-construction documents)</li> <li>➤ For PRA's finalizing of Public Bidding (for solicited) or Competitive Selection Process (for unsolicited), it is targeted for approval until December 2022. And it is in time for other projects to reach the process whereby the proposal is subjected to a competitive challenge process.</li> <li>➤ Last is the Implementation of the Actual Reclamation Works. PRA monitors the project and payment of regulatory fees.</li> </ul> <p>RD Malateo asked which part of the process is the securing of DOT clearance. Engr. Destura answered during the application of Area Clearance covered by DENR A.O. 2018-14 for the Mandatory Requirements. Within 24 months, proponents must secure all the clearances. There are 14 clearance requirements before DENR issues the Area Clearance including DOT's.</p> <p>Ms. Quesea of DOT-MIMAROPA, asked what are the components of the certification from DOT for the application</p>
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	<p>of Area Clearance and what are the considered projects for certification. Mr. Maximo Landrito, Assistant Regional Director for Technical Services of DENR – MIMAROPA, answered that they have received a Presidential Directive 2022-06 deferring the acceptance of new applications for reclamation projects and DENR A.O. 2022-08 Moratorium in the Acceptance of New Applications for Special Exploration Permit / Government Seabed Quarry Permit. Engr. Destura agreed to receive the same Presidential Order stopping PRA from accepting reclamation applications. Relatively, bound by the date of that order all of the applications filed before the issuance of the order are already in process by PRA. Ergo, PRA refused acceptance of new applications after the order was issued. In addition, RD Malateo clarified that reclamations received by the PRA prior to the Presidential Directive will still be processed.</p>
Guidelines Governing the Operations and Recognition of Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Establishments	<p>Representing USEC. Myra Paz Abubakar of the Department of Tourism, Ms. Isabelle Biscocho, MAWD, Executive Assistant IV for OUSEC, presented an overview of MC 2020-010 and the DOT's initiatives for Muslim-friendly tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ms. Biscocho differentiated the Arab terms "Halal" and "Haram". Halal refers to lawful or allowed; while Haram is considered unlawful under Islamic teaching.</li> <li>➤ Ms. Biscocho narrated the aspects and principles of the Global Halal Economy in terms of fashion, recreation, pharmaceuticals, travel, food, and finance. She noted that Halal travel encompasses all key aspects of the Global Halal Economy.</li> <li>➤ Most Muslims find traveling challenging as most establishments are unable to cater to their needs in terms of having the accessibility of Muslim-friendly accommodation, food, and entertainment establishments. The DOT is further promoting the country as a Muslim-friendly destination.</li> <li>➤ In 2019, Muslim tourist arrivals had reached 160 Million across the globe with USD 238 Billion expected global spending of Muslim tourists; a big difference compared to the USD 140 Billion global spending in 2013. This information makes Muslim travelers a viable market in promotions.</li> <li>➤ The country reached its most number of Muslim tourist arrivals in 2018, with a total of 663,656 visitor arrivals. The top 3 Muslim populated countries included Singapore, South Asia and Malasia.</li> <li>➤ It is worth noting that in 2021, 19.68% of the country's visitor Arrivals were from Islamic / Muslim populated countries.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Upon discussion of the aspects and significance of strengthening Halal Tourism in the industry, Ms. Biscocho presented the updates and initiatives of the DOT through the MC. 2020-010 entitled: "Guidelines Governing the Operations and Recognition of Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Establishments"</li> <li>➤ The circular applies to all DOT Accredited accommodation establishments in the Philippines that intend to apply for a certificate of recognition as a Muslim-friendly accommodation establishment.</li> <li>➤ The circular details the dimensions which the accommodation establishment must incorporate as Muslim-friendly. These dimensions include guest handling, availability of Muslim-friendly guest rooms, Halal food &amp; beverages, kitchen, public areas and hotel transport services.</li> <li>➤ The circular also explains the application process an establishment must comply to be certified as Muslim-friendly as well as the validity of the certification.</li> <li>➤ Ms. Biscocho presented other programs of the DOT in promoting Halal tourism such as the Halal Culinary Tourism campaign, the presentation on Mindanao Halal food, culture, myths, and facts in KainCon PH webinar during the 2022 Filipino Food Month, the conduct of Halal orientations for restaurants, and the Colors of Mindanao campaign.</li> <li>➤ To conclude her presentation, Ms. Biscocho also presented the pipelined projects of the DOT for Halal Tourism.</li> </ul> <p>Ms. Quesea mentioned that the DOT MIMAROPA regional office had recently conducted a Halal Tourism Awareness Seminar and Readiness Assessment in Puerto Princesa City and some parts of South Palawan in partnership with the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF).</p> <p>Ms. Jay De Guzman of the regional office and the project officer of the said program, then narrated that the majority of the establishments assessed may apply for certification.</p> <p>Given this information, Ms. De Guzman asked if the DOT OUSEC has an available template or standard on how establishments can apply and if they only require the provision of a letter of intent.</p> <p>Ms. Biscocho answered that all guidelines are narrated in the circular and that the DOT OUSEC shall provide the regional office with a copy.</p>
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	<p>Ms. Quesea requested the OUSEC to conduct an orientation on MC 2020-010 and Ms. Biscocho responded that the office will be much willing to do so.</p> <p>Ms. De Guzman asked about the composition of the Halal Focal Unit and if the focal person of the inspecting unit for the certification shall be from the regional or central office.</p> <p>Ms. Biscocho clarified that a Halal Focal Unit will be part of the OUSEC and that another unit should also comprise one (1) representative from OTSR, the central office, and the regional office.</p> <p>Ms. Yolanda Cabigao of DOT MIMAROPA asked for the availability of a list of Muslim-friendly recognized hotels and if the circular shall also be applicable to restaurants.</p> <p>Ms. Biscocho confirmed that there is indeed a list of certified hotels from data submitted by regional offices. Through roll-outs and surveys conducted around the country, an estimate of one hundred (100) Muslim-friendly certified accommodation establishments and seventy (70) restaurants are available.</p> <p>The circular is also applicable for restaurants, as a major part of the circular is Halal kitchen and food and beverage-related.</p>
Status of Ongoing Tourism Road Infrastructure Project (TRIP)	<p>The Status of on-going TRIP projects was presented by ENGR. Dennis Abagon from the OIC Section, Chief Planning and Design Division of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ENGR. Abagon briefly narrated the status, budget allocation, total fiscal target and locations covering the TRIP projects of the region.</li> <li>➤ ENGR. Abagon first presented the three (3) TRIP access road projects for Occidental Mindoro which comprises the access roads leading to Luyang Baga Cave in Abra de Ilog, Wawa Fish Sanctuary and Beaches in Calintaan and road to Devil's Mountain and farms in San Jose.</li> <li>➤ Moving forward, the province of Palawan currently has a total of seventeen (17) road projects in North Palawan, nine (9) in the south, and one (1) for Mainland Puerto Princesa City. These consist of access and circumferential roads leading to both established and emerging destinations.</li> <li>➤ The province of Romblon currently has one (1) TRIP project which is the San Jose Circumferential Road leading to various beaches in San Jose, Romblon.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The province of Oriental Mindoro currently has a total of seven (7) road projects, all of which are located in the south.</li> <li>➤ In summary, the region has a total of thirty-eight (38) on-going TRIP projects with a funded budget in prior years CY 2022 amounting to PhP7,577,613,000.00 and a balance of PhP5,838,267,000.00 for FY 2023 onwards.</li> </ul> <p>Ms. Quesea asked if LGUS are still welcome to submit their project proposals directly to the DPWH?</p> <p>Engr. Abagon answered that the office currently has an order which states that such proposals would have to be submitted to the concerned agency as per corrosion concerns.</p> <p>Mr. Edwin Amparo from the Oriental Mindoro Tourism Office clarified if the Oriental-Occidental Subconferential road is not a part of the TRIP project.</p> <p>Engr. Abagon replied that the project is included in the agency's regular project and that the target year for its completion is set to five (5) years.</p>
Peace Village project	<p>Mr. Marc Ramiro Ortiz Luis of the DOT-MIMAROPA, briefly discussed the Peace Village Development Project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Mr. Ortiz Luis mentioned that the main goal of this initiative is to promote productivity and resiliency among communities regardless of how diverse their culture and norms are.</li> <li>➤ The planning and development of peace villages will greatly help the tourism industry and other industries in promoting inclusive growth, peace and order, safety, and security and will add to the promotion of diverse cultures of the Filipino communities in the region.</li> <li>➤ Mr. Ortiz Luis also narrated the key objectives of the project which includes the strengthening of cultural identities through tourism developments, promotion of gender-sensitive community by GAD initiatives and women empowerment, safety and security initiatives among communities, preservation of cultural identities and local livelihood, enhancement of equitable distribution of income through the identification of potential or existing local products for development, and boosting of tourism attractions and activities through peace village (Cultural Tourism).</li> <li>➤ Mr. Ortiz Luis also mentioned that the regional office will initiate and conduct pre-assessments in the provinces of Occidental Mindoro (Mangyan</li> </ul>

	<p>Communities), Oriental Mindoro (Hanunuo Mangyan), and Palawan (Palawan Tribe and Panlaitan Village).</p> <p>➤ The regional office is also set to conduct tourism rapid assessments and Gap/Needs Analysis in the communities of Brooke's Point in Palawan, San Jose and Magsaysay in Occidental Mindoro, and Bulalacao and Mansalay in Oriental Mindoro. The office shall also invite Regional Line Agencies (RLAs) on scheduled site validation for the identification of interventions based on respective mandates and projects.</p>
Next Steps/Remarks	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approval of the Highlights of the Previous Meeting – 7 days from March 29, 2022.</li> <li>2. DENR to call for a meeting with the concerned agencies (DOT &amp; DPWH) and LGUs regarding the issuance of certification on reclamation projects.</li> <li>3. Orientation for MC 2020-10: Guidelines Governing the Operations and Recognition of Muslim-Friendly Accommodation Establishments with concerned agencies (DTI, DA &amp; DOST) and LGUs.</li> </ol>	

Prepared by: MRTC Secretariat